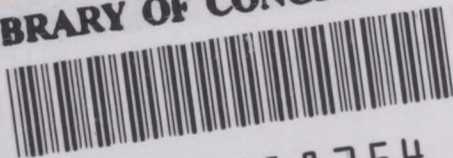


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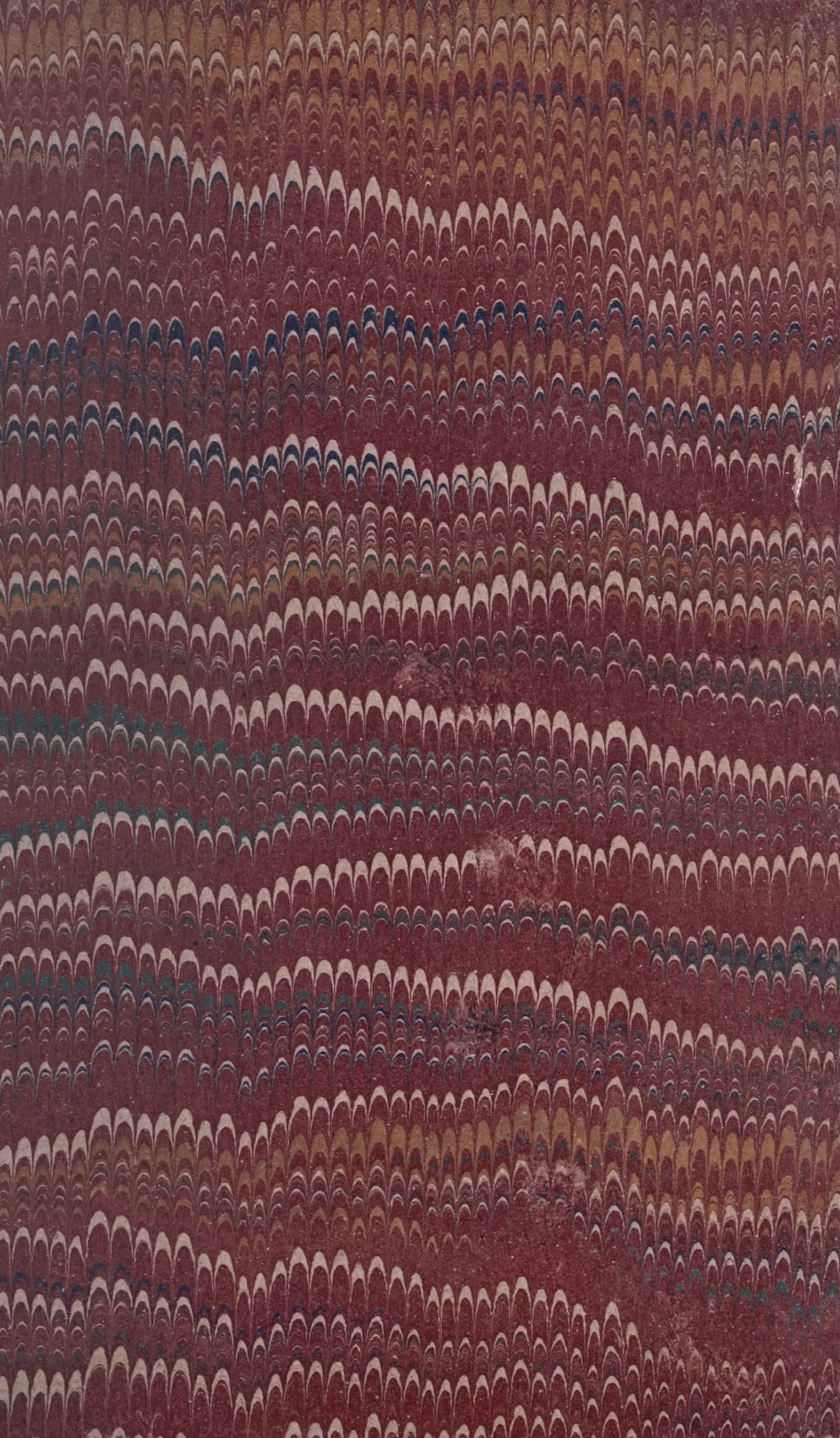
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THE

ARAB WIFE.

A ROMANCE OF THE POLYNESIAN SEAS.



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APPLETONS' NEW HANDY-VOLUME SERIES. V. 1

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THE ARAB WIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE AMERICAN SKIPPER.

MY father was colonel of an English regiment of dragoons ; and at the early age of seventeen I was gazetted as cornet under his command. We were stationed at the cavalry cantonments of Kirkee, some few miles from the famous city of Poona ; and I had just escaped from the nuisances of drill and riding-school, which I was forced to undergo, although, as a son of the regiment, I had long been familiar with everything which a subaltern is supposed to know. Having plenty of spare time on my hands, I occupied myself diligently in learning the dialect of the common people, who here speak Gujrati, the language of the Parsees and of the western seaport towns of India. While time was thus passing agreeably and profitably, I was one morning surprised by my father,

who came into the bungalow in a state of sorrowful excitement. "Charlie," he said, "your uncle Joe in Australia has gone under, and has left us every farthing he possessed. Poor Joe ! I haven't seen him for twenty years, when he left Southampton for the new world. He was very sanguine about making a fortune and buying our old estates back in England."

I had never seen this uncle ; and, as he was a very bad correspondent, his letters had been few and far between. We were stationed at the Cape when my mother died, and a letter arrived from him in answer to the announcement ; since which time we had heard nothing about him. My father seemed to feel the death of his brother keenly ; but I hardly knew how to offer him any consolation, nor did I like to ask whether my uncle's death would make any change in our mode of life. I therefore remained silent until he chose to inform me, which he did in the evening after the mess-dinner. There had been one or two remarks made on the subject *sotto voce* among our brother-officers, and I could not help thinking that there was an unwonted hilarity in the manner of the lieutenant-colonel and one or two others. The secret of this was explained by my father, who took me aside in the mess-room and told me, to my great astonishment, that my uncle Joe had died worth a quarter of a million, and that we should leave the service immediately.

In a few days, accordingly, our papers were made out, and we took the horse-dak for Panwell, where we found a schooner going to Calcutta with salt. We engaged our passage, and soon arrived at the mouth of the Hoogly, where we found a pilot-boat; and as my father was very fidgety about loss of time, and annoyed over the slow run from Panwell, we engaged it for the trip up to Calcutta. When we arrived at the City of Palaces we had more waiting before we could find a vessel bound for Melbourne. But at length the colonel was introduced to the skipper of the Shooting Star, Captain Robert Orde, an American gentleman, who owned his vessel, and sailed wherever he could see an opportunity of profit.

"Colonel Wade," said he (my father was very proud of his name, which he derived from the famous General Wade), "if you like to come along with me, I guess you can; but I must do the Christian thing by you, and tell you the truth—I'm dreadfully short-handed. What with sickness and what with desertion, I'm thirteen men short."

"Lascars make good sailors, I'm told, Captain Orde," said my father; "hire them and fill up your complement."

"You're about right, colonel, as to their making good sailors, so far as mere sailing is concerned, and so long as they're in a warm climate; but they make mighty mean fighters."

"Well, captain, do you expect to go to war with anybody?"

"No, sir ; I don't like it : it don't pay. But I haven't the choice this time, nor has any man who sails the Chinese seas."

"Take us, Orde," said my father, clapping him on the shoulder, "and you'll have two fellows that will fight. I've been soldiering for thirty years, and Charlie is a rare fighter, according to his own account."

While I was endeavoring to disclaim this compliment, preliminaries were adjusted by the entrance of the clerk with the papers. The colonel paid the passage-money, and a handsome double cabin on board the Shooting Star was assigned to our use. We took possession, and next day the vessel left Calcutta, bearing us toward our fortune in Australia.

Life at sea is so dreary and uniform that I may be pardoned for saying little about it. The Yankee skipper was evidently very much to my father's taste, for he was never tired of conversing with him and listening to his yarns. I liked the latter well enough myself ; but their long discussions about republics and monarchies, and their arguments about slavery, I found excessively dry, so I struck up an acquaintance with the second mate, who taught me how to make knots, how to steer, and how to take an observation. All this time the wind blew steadily from the northeast,

and the ship's log showed such cheering figures that my father's impatience was assuaged, and his spirits were uniformly high. But the wind veered round to the north, then to the northwest, then west, and at last blew southwest with tremendous force, increasing in violence so greatly that we were obliged to reduce our sails to a double-reefed fore-topsail and storm-jib. It became quite a storm ; and, as the captain seemed somewhat anxious, the colonel asked him downright if we were going to have a typhoon. Captain Orde in his pleasant way slipped both his arms into ours, and, walking us up and down the quarter-deck, said : "Gents both, I don't care how hard it blows, or how long it blows, for the Shooting Star knows how to behave herself agin wind and wave ; but my experience is that, when these gales blow themselves out, we may generally expect a calm, and a long calm too. And if you will remember the little talk we had at Calcutta, you may remember what I said about being under-manned. Now, the fastest vessel that ever sailed is no better than a fish out of water in a calm, and I'm free to say that in a case of a brush I wish I had more men. However, it's agin my natur, as we Yanks say, to make trouble ; but your sharp eye, colonel, saw the puckers in my brow ; you wanted to know the reason, and you do."

"That's hearty, captain. I declare you ought to have been born in our little island, you're so

downright. Of course you're all the better for telling us, and so are we; and when the time comes we'll show you what British sabres can do."

"Colonel, I hope never to see it; but, when the time comes, I'll show you a weapon a trifle more valuable than a sabre—a little thing like this;" and he pulled out a pistol all gilded and ivory. "There," said he, "this is what we call a revolver, and this pretty toy will kill seven men in seven seconds. I've another, colonel, which you're welcome to; and if there's any slaying around these parts, you'll admit that this little weapon is the right thing in the right place. When the calm comes, as come it will, I'll show you how to use it."

Captain Orde was right in his prediction, for in less than twenty-four hours the wind died completely away, and we were rocking on the troubled waters. Soon they too became absolutely at rest, save for the long swell, that seemed like the breathing of some huge animal, which made our vessel rock as if she would pitch the masts clean out of her. Even this at last ceased, and we were absolutely and completely becalmed. Then began our initiation into the mysteries of the seven-shooting pistol. The colonel and I practised daily at bottles in the water, and became quite expert; and then my governor insisted that his man Duncan should learn too. Captain Orde seemed to be full

of humor and overbrimming spirits, as if the realization of his predictions had made him in better temper with himself and every one around him. His vessel was a temperance one—not that no liquors were kept on board, but that the men had no daily allowance of grog. But on special occasions the grog-tub made its appearance at eight bells, and each man had his tot. Apparently this calm weather, when the men had nothing to do save to make ratlin and plait sennit, was one of them ; and the crew declared with a good-natured oath that “Bully Orde was a skipper as *was* a skipper, and knowed the feelings of a sailor.” There were altogether thirty-three American seamen on board, and fifteen Lascars, and the latter seemed as fine men as I had ever seen. But Orde looked at them contemptuously ; and though he interfered when the first mate, who was rather rough, struck one of them for some offence, yet it was plain that he would have given the whole fifteen for four white men.

Under pretense of finding work for the men, the muskets were overhauled, cleaned, and ranged in glittering rows round the masts ; the lumber about the decks was stowed away, so as to give a fair show to the two twelve-pound carronades that formed the ship’s armament ; the cutlasses were ground to razor sharpness, though the captain told my father confidentially that they didn’t amount to a row of pins ; and the vessel was made as fit

for combat as if an enemy were in actual sight. Some of the seamen laughed about the skipper's devices to keep the men from idleness ; but the older men said nothing, and yet looked out toward the southeast, as if expecting to see something. The three mates and the quartermasters took turn about to be on the lookout in an incidental and careless way. And so the calm continued for a fortnight, and nothing had happened. The vigorous manner in which some of us whistled for a wind would certainly have brought a hurricane, according to old superstitions ; but we had not even that luck, and day by day she lay

“Like a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.”

My father took it upon him to rally the captain upon the failure of his predictions.

“Colonel,” said the wise American, “I only predicted a calm ; and calm you will acknowledge it to be. I feared the proas of the piratical Malays ; but I didn't predict 'em. I fear them still, and shall continue to until we're going easy on a bowline for Port Phillip Heads. We seem, you see, Charlie, as if we were still ; but we're moving steady, steady toward the Strait of Malacca. The current sweeps us steadily in that direction, and has been taking us nearer and nearer to our enemy ever since the calm set in. A breeze might spring up and give us a chance to spread our wings from

this piratical, head-cutting, stink-pot-dropping neighborhood, before the yellow-skinned wretches and the black blubber-lipped nigger Papuans smell out the whereabouts of so much decent flesh and blood. It might do so, gentlemen ; if this were a story in a novel, the breeze might spring just as we were having a warm bout with the swarthy sinners ; but you mark my words : we shan't have any such luck. And, colonel, it's what I call an uncommon privilege to have the pleasure of pouring my previsions into your sympathizing ears, for I have continually to make pretense afore the men, and the reaction is great. It's a privilege, sir, and I esteem it as such. Try a cheroot ; they're real Trichinopoly."

We accepted the offer, and were just engaged in the act of all three bending our heads to the same match, when the second mate approached our group hurriedly and said, in low excited tones : " Captain, there's a whole fleet of proas coming up from the south."

Captain Orde very leisurely lighted his cheroot, while I must confess I dropped mine, and my father forgot to light his. He gave a few puffs, and said : " Who saw them ? "

" I myself, captain."

" Telescope ? "

" Yes, sir."

" Far off ? "

" Very far."

"That will do, sir ; I am obliged to you for your vigilance."

As the officer withdrew he looked quizzically after him and said, "Flynn is a good fellow, but he's a desperate slow-witted man. I'll wager three drinks, colonel, that there's five or six sampans half-way between us and them proas, and he's never seen them."

"What's a sampan, skipper?" I asked.

"Why, Charlie, it's a canoe about as substantial as an egg-shell, and about as large. The proas always send fellows out to reconnoitre ; skirmishers, you military men would call them, only they don't skirmish."

"Could you not order out your boats, and let my son and me take command of them, and capture or kill these skirmishers?"

"Hem!" said the skipper ; "we'll find them first ; we'll examine the ocean, and try if my prediction, as you term it, is anywhere near the mark."

I dived down into the cabin hurriedly and brought up a pair of opera-glasses, through which I took a hurried squint, but without seeing anything save the glassy water. Joining my father and Captain Orde, I found the latter armed with a tremendous telescope of his own construction, for which he was going to take a patent when he returned to the States. He was looking steadily in the direction of the east, and then swept his

glass around a half-circle for about fifteen minutes. We were in an agony of impatience when he put it down, and waited for him to speak ; but he handed the telescope to my father without a word.

“One, two, three ; by Jove, there are *seven* little boats,” cried my father. “Captain Orde, I believe you’re descended from the Salem witches.”

“No, sir ; I’m from New Haven. Not but what Salem’s a pretty place, but New Haven’s a better. And, as for witches, let Charlie go sleighing there in winter-time, and I guess there’ll be some bewitching.”

“How long will it be before those scoundrels come up to us ?”

“About a day and a half.”

“Are they in much force ?”

“Look for yourself, colonel. The proas are nigh hull down, and it’s hard to count heads at that distance ; but there are seven proas.”

“Then each proa sent a sampan as a scout.”

“Jess so, colonel ; and there the scouts’ll remain until the proas come up. And now I’m open to wager that we won’t have a wind, and that we’ll beat them off ; and I’ll tell you what I mean to do. Those Lascars can’t fight worth a cent. I don’t blame them a bit, for it ain’t their nature ; but it won’t do to give them muskets which they can’t use to advantage. These proas, sir, are furnished with stink-pots, which they chuck on a Christian’s deck, and smother all hands into insen-

sibility. Now, I propose to do this. The Lascars shall be armed with long bamboos and stationed in the rigging. You and Charlie and some others and myself, who can shoot pretty decently, will just keep track of the stink-pot men and crack away at them. The Lascars with their long poles must shatter the stink-pots in the enemy's hands ; and between us we must never let one come on our decks, for if we do, our decent heads will be hung up in some charming village of Borneo. How do you like that, colonel ? ”

“ Like which, Orde ; the head business or your plan of operations ? ”

“ Why, my plan, of course. ”

“ I like it very well. But I must tell you that I understand artillery tolerably well, and, if you will permit me, I'll take one of your carronades. ”

“ Just as you please, my good friend ; though, if you have no objection, I should prefer your services at the rigging ; but of course I should be proud to have you anywhere. One of our men has been in Uncle Sam's navy, and the second mate is an old hand as a gunner ; however, your decision will be mine. ”

“ My father elected for the twelve-pounder, which I was sorry for, as I should have liked to fight beside him. But Captain Orde took me on one side, and assured me that the rigging was the place of honor, as the natives always fired their brass swivels at it ; and the stink-pots were really

the most formidable artillery we had to encounter. So the revolver which he had given to my father was intrusted to me; and very proud I was of the confidence and the opportunity of showing my pluck. We took our meals as usual, though for my part I was too excited to eat; but my father insisted that I should eat heartily, and I did my best. On him and the skipper the excitement produced no perceptible change; and the first mate, who, by special invitation, shared the last dinner, ate as if endeavoring to do justice to the situation.

The proas had now come fully into sight, and were indeed only a mile or two off. The bulwarks of our vessel were uncommonly high, and the hammocks of the men were triced up in man-of-war fashion. The carronades were heavily loaded, and the muskets were capped and ready lying on the deck. It was for me rather a doleful dinner; and I am free to acknowledge that, when my father took me on one side and solemnly kissed me, I could not keep some large tears from silently stealing down my cheek.

“Charlie, my boy,” said my father, “we are in the hands of Providence, and can never know what may happen. I have luckily sent all the money I had to England, and have therefore nothing but clothing to lose. But I have something here which I could not dispose of in India, and which I could not send by any one.” Here

he drew from underneath his shirt a small bag, which I had always supposed contained some relic or pledge of affection. He opened the mouth, and poured into his hand an enormous diamond of the most perfect water, a sapphire rather bigger, and two huge pearls.

“There,” said he, “if brother Joe had not died, that would have been the best part of your fortune. It’s my loot at Ahmednuggur. I give them to you now, and advise you to secrete them, for you are so young and so boyish-looking that you will be made a slave ; whereas, if the ship is taken, we grizzled beards will lose the number of our mess. God bless and keep my dear boy !” Here he kissed me on the forehead, passed his hands caressingly over my curly yellow hair, and gently pushed me out of the cabin. I secreted the precious gems in an inner pocket of my vest, resolved to put them in my mouth if I should find myself a captive.

As it was approaching sunset, which is very speedy in those countries, the boatswain’s whistle blew, and we hurried on deck. My dear old father came out stripped to the waist, and I thought, as he took his place beside the carronade on the starboard side, that he looked more than ever a perfect gentleman. The crew seemed to think so too, for they gave him a ringing cheer, to which he bowed his grand old head ; and Captain Orde, who was beside me, whispered : “Charlie,

your father's one of that breed called trumps, and, if you grow up like him, you'll be a good fellow to know." The boatswain piped again, and the captain came out into the centre of the deck to make a little speech.

He said : " My men, I'm short-handed, as you know, and not through any fault or meanness of mine." (Chorus, "That's so.") " I thank you for saying so, because, if I thought, or if others thought, that I had jeopardized the lives of Christian men and my own ship to save a few dollars, I should be ashamed of the hour I was born." ("Good boy! bully for you!") " I intend to fight this ship as long as there's a man to defend it, or there's a plank to defend. When there ain't, them Yellow Jacks can take what's left." ("Hooray!") We've two passengers aboard, men, whom you can see. They're gentlemen, and they're likely to do a mighty deal of fighting. And, men, we'll have to be pretty spry, or these British will do more fight than we, which, as Americans, we can't permit nohow." ("Hooray!" and considerable laughter.) "And now, I've said all I've got to say, and in about ten minutes the ball will open. These heathens are going to pay us a visit. My words are : 'Let's make it lively for them.'"

This speech was received very heartily by the men, who were evidently prepared to do their utmost; and my father still further encouraged

them by engaging to give every man who came out of the fight a hundred dollars in silver, and to pay the same to his widow if he got killed.

A great shout from the proas arrested our attention, and we turned toward the sea. We could distinctly see the flashing of their oars as they moved simultaneously toward our left, evidently intending to take up a position around our bows. They were at this time about half a mile distant ; and, though the second mate wished to give them a shot, the captain decided that it was useless, as we had no round-shot, nothing but slugs and canister. We therefore watched them in silence as they moved through the motionless water, each minute showing more clearly the grinning teeth of the wretches inside. We could distinguish the various races among them—the hairless, chinless, blubber-lipped, woolly-headed Papuans; the sleek, yellow, tiger-like Malays ; and the bronzed bold forms of the Arabs. The sun was low in the heavens, about an hour from sunset, as they gradually drew near ; and all seemed so peaceful, so still, so beautiful, that my mind involuntarily softened, and I wished that it were possible to avoid a fight, for which previously I had been eagerly longing. But the noise of the carronades that were being dragged forward awoke me from my reverie. I turned round, and saw Captain Orde at my elbow.

“I rather think, Charlie, that these niggers

will be somewhat surprised. They've come up on our bows because they've seen only two portholes, both aft ; but, if you look opposite to where them carronades are posted, you'll see ten portholes, that I didn't think necessary to designate by unnecessary painting. There's a compartment of the bulwarks that slides aside, and when the darkies come up we'll give them *Hail Columbia!* Business will commence pretty speedily. You and I will take the foremast with eight Lascars and their bamboo poles ; the second mate and a quartermaster will take the main ; and two trusty fellows will have the mizzen."

"All very satisfactory, captain," said I ; "but won't the second mate get the post of honor? Isn't the mainmast the most ticklish part?"

"No, sirree ; I wouldn't go back on a friend in that way. We, my boy, have got to stand the brunt of the first attack ; and it's only as the proas forge ahead in the thick of the battle that their muskets will speak. That's why we're here with the revolvers. Beautiful weather for slaying, isn't it?"

I looked surprised, when he burst out : "Don't mind my feeble joke ; but it's an expression among the Western men when they're scalp-hunting. These fellows that we're going to tackle go for the whole head, being more civilized. But here they come ! Shake hands, chum, and then aim steady and fire slow."

We shook hands formally, and ascended the rigging of the foremast, taking our position half-way up to the foretop, the Lascars clustering below us with their long poles, and others mounting to the top itself. I looked anxiously at my father, and saw him steady as a rock, with his hand on the lanyard and his eye immovably fixed on the proas.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIGHT.

THE piratical craft came on steadily until within musket-shot of our bows. They were all in a huddle, and, if we could have veered round the Shooting Star, we might have used our caronades to good purpose. But we were immovable, and could not use the fair opportunity. The proas halted for a few minutes, during which the jabbering on board of their craft was indescribable, and can be likened to nothing save the chattering of a menagerie of apes. At length they seemed resolved upon a line of action, and divided, three proas coming on our port side, three on our starboard, and one holding itself aloof, and rowing behind the three starboard attackers at a leisurely pace. I must confess that I didn't like this division of labor, as I saw clearly that I should have to be separated from Captain Orde.

Hardly had I divined this when he said : “Shiny up to the top and take the port side. I must remain here.” I went at once ; and when I got into the foretop I glanced at the proas, and saw that to starboard the pirates were at least a minute ahead of the scoundrels coming against my station. I examined my muskets—of which there were four in the top ready loaded—and my revolver, exchanged a few words with the Lascars to encourage them, and then turned round to watch the colonel. Almost instantly his hand went up, the sliding bulwark went back, his caronade was run forward on the proa that was nearest. It was at that time so near you might have tossed a biscuit among the villains. He pulled the lanyard, and the storm of canister went with a thundering report among the vile crew, killing and wounding many, and playing sad havoc with the frail timbers of the proa. The bulwark slid back, and the reloading commenced, as I supposed, for I turned my head to the contemplation of my own duties, which were sufficiently onerous to claim my entire attention.

When the proas came within range, the same manœuvre of sliding back the bulwark and firing was repeated by our side with very considerable effect, but not sinking either of the proas. After the discharge of our twelve-pounder, and before we had time to reload, the dusky heathens were swarming up our bulwarks, and, standing in the

rigging of their short masts, were endeavoring to hoist upon our decks their infamous stink-pots. These were made of earthenware, resembling the chatties of India, and were suspended by ropes of tough coir. I had a feeling, as I poised my musket before aiming at a gigantic Papuan, something as I had experienced before diving in head first when I was learning to swim. I aimed steadily, however, fired, and the man went down. The ice was broken, and from that moment my muskets were fired with as much rapidity and deadly effect as I could compass. Nor did any stink-pot burst over the heads of the men below me, to my great satisfaction. The carronades boomed away with a regularity that was joyful to my ears, easy to be distinguished from the sharp bang of the brass swivels of the pirates. Soon, however, the increasing numbers of the enemy forced us who were in the tops to rally to the assistance of the men on the decks, and, sabre in hand, I dashed into the *mélée*. My revolver was emptied, and consequently useless. I soon found myself hotly engaged with a stalwart Arab, who rained down such a shower of blows upon me with his *tulwar* that it was with difficulty I could parry them. I could not even attempt to make any rejoinder, and with the utmost despair I felt my strength fast leaving me. As I endeavored to collect my strength for a last effort, I was suddenly hooked from behind, and before I could

know the cause, I received a blow on the head from the Arab's sword, and lost consciousness.

When I regained it, I found myself lying at the bottom of a proa, with the warm blood pouring over my face from a smart cut on the forehead. My hands and feet were bound with some confounded substance that cut into the flesh and gave me extreme pain. But I was so weak from loss of blood that I could not have raised my head if my life had depended on it. I tried in vain for some time to remember where I was or what had transpired, but I could not. The regular loud report of the carronades, the discharge of the muskets, the firing of the swivels, the oaths, the shouts, and all the uproar of determined fight, I heard to perfection, without the slightest comprehension of what it meant. Vaguely the reports seemed to become less loud, as I again lost consciousness, which was only regained by a swarm of heathens pouring into the proa and trampling over my prostrate body. Even then I could not realize the misfortune that had befallen me.

Soon, however, I heard the regular sound of oars striking the water, and perceived that we were moving. At length this motion stopped, and the firing of the brass swivels began again, and was kept up with considerable spirit. I listened instinctively for the deeper boom of the carronades, not for any particular reason, but because

my ear had heard it before at regular intervals, and expected it.

I must have lost consciousness several times, when at last the expected sound was heard. I was gratified—I did not know why—but still some instinct seemed to tell me that things were all right, and I fell asleep. My awakening was a rough one. A vesselful of salt-water was dashed in my face, and the smarting of the wound on my head made me at once very wide awake. I was hauled into an upright position by two oily-skinned Malays, and brought before the Arab who had cut me down. He looked at me and nodded, speaking in what I supposed was Arabic. I answered in Hindustani that I did not speak Arabic. He seemed to recognized some of the sounds, but evidently did not understand what I said. Then I tried Gujrati, which is the sailor-tongue of Western India; but this also was unknown to him. There was, however, another Arab who pressed forward and spoke to me in Cutch, a dialect of Gujrati, and one with which I was fortunately familiar. He then spoke to the man who cut me down, in Arabic; and soon I was deluged with questions as to the vessel that had been attacked, and which I now learned had succeeded in beating them off. I could not help a smile of pleasure at the intelligence, which, however, was soon damped by reflecting on my own situation. The Arabs, of whom there were at least five standing around the one

who had felled me, began an animated discussion, which I could not help believing referred to myself, and I waited with considerable anxiety for the result. It was at this time, as near as I could judge by the position of the moon, about midnight. There was a light breeze stirring, very light indeed, but sufficient to fill the sails of the proas, the rowers of which were asleep on their broad benches. The piratical vessels were all together, going very easily, but there was no light of any kind on any of the vessels. I learned afterward that this was from fear of the sword-fish, which abound in these waters, and which occasionally attack these frail craft, driving their sharp snouts right through the thin planking.

At length the discussion was over, and the Arab chief, taking from the silver receptacle in his girdle a broad whistle, applied it to his lips and sent forth a piercing sound. A response came immediately from the six other proas ; and within a few seconds light splashes were heard, which were soon accounted for by the appearance of six sampans, which quickly boarded our proa, the chiefs of the other vessels crowding around the Arab. I was somewhat unceremoniously dragged into the centre of the circle and exhibited. The Arab spoke a few brief sentences in Malay, to which the others responded by motions of assent and waving of hands ; whereupon I was as unceremoniously dragged away by the Cutch-speaking Arab, who whis-

pered to me in a low tone of voice, when we were at the bow, that I happened to be the only result of the expedition so far ; that the Arab chief had taken me prisoner by his sword, and therefore I belonged to him as his slave, which I might consider lucky, for if I had belonged to the general spoil I should either have been decapitated and my head hung up as a trophy in some Malay hut, or have been given to a Malay chief as a slave, to pass the remainder of my life in cutting wood in the forests, or toiling at the pearl-fisheries.

“*Bhai*,” said I (this being Cutch for brother), “what does your chief intend to do with me?”

“I do not know,” he replied ; “that will depend very much on yourself.”

“Well, brother, would you cut these bonds around my hands ? The coir cuts into the flesh, and I can hardly bear the pain.”

“Wait,” said the friendly Cutchman, “until the conference of the *reis* is over. They are discussing whether they shall return or seek a fresh prey.”

The pain was really intolerable, and, after the smarting of my wounded head had ceased, made itself more and more apparent ; and the groans which I could not repress, with all my pride, moved my companion to pity. He drew a neat little dagger from his girdle and quickly released me from my agony. Then, taking some leaves, he chewed them into a mass and applied it to the

places where the skin was cut. Then he examined the cut on my head, which he said was *bahut chota* (a very trifling affair); and that, if some slave had not hooked me from behind, the chief's tulwar would inevitably have sent my soul to Eblis. "Whereas now," said he, with considerable unction, "the finger of the Prophet, whose name be praised ! is on thy head, and thou shalt become a believer of the true God, and a sharer in the paradise of His people."

To this I made no reply ; but I scrutinized the man with more attention than I had hitherto bestowed, being so full with pains and aches from the constrained posture in which I had lain that I had taken very little notice of the persons and things around me. I asked the Cutchman his name. He said he was called Abou Ben Rashid, and that he belonged to the tribe of the Beni Gharas of Morbat. He was clothed in the usual Arab costume, but he had a Hindustani tulwar instead of an Arab sword, which has no crossbar to the hilt ; and his girdle was of very massive silver. He was an old man, with a scanty grizzled beard, and a face resembling very much what we see in pictures of the Jewish patriarchs. In fact, had I seen it anywhere else, I should have taken it for a type of benevolence. Just at that moment, too, he was looking specially gentle, for he had a possible convert in hand, and I had heard my father say that the Mussulmans would move

heaven and earth to make proselytes to Moham-med. I think, too, that perhaps the old man felt real compassion for me, for I was singularly blond in complexion ; and, if it had not been for the mustache of yellow down which ornamented my upper lip, I might easily have passed for a girl. At any rate, it was evident that he wished to be kind, and I felt grateful to him ; so I told him that, though I had no intention of abandoning the faith in which I was reared, I had no objection at some future time to hear the tenets which the Arabs held ; but that at present I should be grateful if I might have some water to drink. My friend Abou nodded, and brought me some in a calabash, which I drank with the utmost delight. He then unrolled from his arm a cocoanut matting (which I found afterward was his prayer-carpet) and a light Arab robe, and told me to go to sleep if I could, and not to fear for anything, as the crew understood that I belonged to their chief, whose name was Nizam, though he was generally called Reis or Mirza.

At seventeen Hope is a much more important personage than in later years. Though my position was a painful one, yet the certainty that the Shooting Star had escaped, and the strong probability that my dear father was all right, were great consolations. Old Abou was probably high in the confidence of the Reis Nizam, and he was disposed to be friendly. I had not been rifled,

and my precious stones were still in the inner pocket of my vest. Something might be done with these. And as I was pondering all sorts of impossible plans, I fell fast asleep, and did not wake until the sun was high in the heavens, and old Abou gave me a friendly shake of the arm to waken me.

Though still considerably cramped, I was in good enough spirits when I woke, and felt quite capable of eating anything that might be brought before me. I hinted as much to Abou ; but he told me that the Arabs had only two set meals a day, at noon and at sunset, but that, if I was very hungry, he would bring me some dates. I assented eagerly, and he brought me a huge lump, nearly a pound, which I ate with so much relish that Abou declared I should make a capital Arab. The wind was very light, and the heavy matting sails hardly drew at all. Soon it came only in cats'-paws, and the rowers took their stations and commenced their labors. I took the liberty of asking Abou, when he invited me to share the boiled rice and fish which was the noonday meal, whether we were returning to the chief's place or still on the lookout. To my great disgust, I learned that we were still on the lookout.

My first experiences at an Arab meal were peculiar. Neither knife nor fork, and Abou explained that the right hand only must be used, as the left was Sheitan's hand. The manner of pro-

ceeding, which I closely imitated, was to take a handful of rice, manipulate it with the fingers into a round ball, and then swallow it ; then break off a piece of fish with the fingers, swallow that, and attack the rice again. Let me confess that I did this with keen enjoyment, as a bit of excellent fun. When we had finished eating, Abou called a Papuan and gave him the two platters with a superb air. The nigger received them with a profusion of thanks, and carried them off in high glee ; while my old friend and I washed our hands as well as we could in the salt water. Afterward I took a lesson in Arabic, which from my knowledge of Hindustani was extremely easy, the one possessing many words of the other, though the structure and grammar of Hindustani are different.

We were twenty hours on the water before we caught sight of any object. Then the lookout observed a dark mass far away to the eastward ; and all the proas halted at the whistle of the Reis Nizam, or, to speak more correctly, Nizam al Reis. The chiefs of the other proas were all Malays, but had evidently great respect for Nizam, and obeyed him unhesitatingly. I sat cross-legged with Abou in the background, hoping to escape remark ; but it seems that one of the Malays started the idea that, being a white man, I could see farther than other people. So I was questioned, and disclaimed the power very

earnestly ; but I could not help remarking to Abou that the Reis possessed a telescope, and that I wondered he did not use it. I made use of the words "long sight" to express telescope ; but, as Abou did not catch my meaning, I made it clearer by pointing out the thing itself, which I had noticed among a pile of other things in that part of the proa sacred to the captain.

There was a perfect shower of nods when I spoke, and Abou, at a word from Nizam, fetched the telescope, which was handsomely cased in bright, yellow leather. I took off the case and adjusted the focus, took a long gaze at the little dark mass, and discovered it to be a fleet of large proas, the announcement of which was received with evident incredulity. Then I motioned to the chief to look himself, telling Abou to instruct him to close his left eye, myself steadying the glass for him. He looked for a moment, and then turned round with a face of delight, shouting to the other chiefs, "Shin !"—a word which they repeated with intense rapture. I was rather bewildered by all this ; but, in taking a second look, I found that, instead of being large proas, as I thought, they were Chinese junks, and the pirates expected a rich haul. With hardly a minute's pause they were in their sampans, paddling away to their craft ; and in a wonderfully short time the fleet was under full pressure of oars, steering steadily for the unfortunate Celestials.

There was no hesitation, no sampan reconnoitring. They seemed convinced that there could be no resistance, and they dashed straight for the prey.

The chief Nizam looked at me with an approving air, and, calling up Abou, made me explain as well as I could the properties of the telescope and the way to use it. The last I could do perfectly ; and Nizam was evidently greatly delighted when he could arrange the focus for himself, which he managed to do with great quickness. But his questions as to the mechanism I could not well explain. I could only say that there were round pieces of glass arranged in a certain manner by the men whose business it was to make long-sights. This didn't satisfy him ; but, as I evidently could not tell more, he desisted, and told me to remain by Abou, who would take care of me.

In the mean time we were rowing steadily toward the junks, and closed upon them in about a day's chase. When we approached there was a dreadful noise of gongs and drums, rockets were discharged which did not go near us, and the sides of the vessels were manned by fellows having shields painted in the most terrific way. As soon as the brass swivels were discharged, and considerable havoc had been done, the warriors bolted and lay down on their faces. The pirates boarded them, and I had the curiosity to go too. The scene was not without its humorous side. Between decks the vessels were partitioned off into

little cribs, in each of which was a merchant with his stock of goods, his bag of silver, and his provisions. There wasn't room to stand or to lie down, and each man squatted in a ludicrous fashion, awaiting with calmness the inevitable spoliation. This was most complete, and the proas were loaded with spoil of all descriptions. The Malays cut off the heads of the killed, and I believe of the wounded. No slaves were taken. I asked Abou the reason. He said the Chinese were worshipers of devils, that they would not work, and that if they were whipped they would drown themselves. All day long and far into the night the process of transferring valuables continued; and at length, after a thorough ransacking, the junks were abandoned, and the proas were turned toward their home.

My old friend Abou said that to reach this would occupy about two days and a half; and indeed on the third morning we saw the blue cloud which was to be my future prison. I was making astounding progress in Arabic, but it was extremely easy to one who had mastered Hindustani, and the ideas which the Reis formed of my capacity from this circumstance were not deserved. Still I was glad of his high opinion, since I was very reluctant to work as the slaves worked at Jezireh, their duty being to pass through their fingers rotting masses of oysters, and feel for the pearls. This island home of the pirates was called

Jezireh ; but this means simply island, and I have no notion what its real name is, nor have I ever found it named on any chart. I only know that, as we speeded toward it, the island of Celebes was on our right and Borneo on our left, and I should guess it was about thirty-five miles south of either. It was about noon when we entered a long narrow bay, and the proas came alongside a sort of natural jetty of sandstone.

CHAPTER III.

ASHORE.

FOLLOWING Abou ashore—being still under his directions—I waited patiently until the goods, the *spolia opima*, had been discharged and carried to a great storehouse. This took considerable time, and I was heartily tired of my position long before Abou came for me. Meanwhile I looked about me, and found Jezireh not uninviting. The place was clean enough, and the scenery magnificent. A semicircle of hills surrounded the little harbor, spurs of which came close to the water's edge on each side of the town, the range running beyond, and terminating in broad bluffs that went sheer down many thousand feet into the ocean. On the crest of one hill that formed a part of the eastern spur there was a rough sort of castle, seem-

ingly built of mud and stones, and encircled by luxuriant vegetation. The hills were broken in the centre by a stream, which meandered pleasantly through the town, and on whose banks most of the huts were built. They were constructed on piles, for what reason I do not know. I thought perhaps for fear of snakes—though they could easily have twined themselves up—or on account of inundations ; but I learned from Abou that such things were unheard of. At length I formed the theory that the inhabitants were descendants of people who always built their houses in the water, as did the folks in the pile-huts of Lake Constance, and other Swiss and Italian lakes. There are now in South America, and many other parts of the world, people who live in lagoons, who build in similar style ; and it may be that these Malays are descended from some of them.

While engaged in examining the appearance of things, I forgot the fact that I was a stranger and a curiosity to the populace. I was aroused to a knowledge of this by the tittering of a group of children, who had surrounded me, and who, emboldened by my forgetfulness, were about to oblige me with a shower of tiny darts from their toy sumpitans or blowers, which are just like a boy's popgun or pea-shooter. Hearing the sniggering, I turned round, and sent the urchins scampering away as hard as they could, one unlucky fellow falling in his haste. I ran to pick

him up, which act was vilely misconstrued, for they all set up a terrible howl, as if I was going to eat their comrade. This mournful cry brought out the mammas in full force ; and while I was endeavoring to pacify the three-year-old and stop his yells by caressings and strokings, I found myself confronted by a good-looking mamma of about fourteen, yellow as a cowslip, whose eyes blazed fury, and who poured forth a torrent of choice Malay on my head. Placing the child in her arms, I smiled my very sweetest to reassure her ; and, having examined her young hopeful's condition, and found all his limbs and vital organs perfect, and no blood flowing anywhere, she gave him a heavy spanking, just in the fashion of an English mother. After this she walked off with much dignity, not even vouchsafing a look at me.

I was somewhat disappointed, for I felt hungry, and had intended to ask for something to eat, in the universal language of pantomime. But I was luckier than I deemed, after all ; for soon a girl, about nine, as I should think, though fully matured, and probably the sister of the first, brought me out a cocoanut and four plantains, which I received with many thanks. I ate the plantains, and then looked about for some means of opening the nut ; but not finding any, I endeavored to peel off the green rind with my fingers, intending to crack the shell on a stone ; but being a young nut full of milk, I could not get

the rind off. So I was forced to look around for assistance, and soon found that the family to whom I owed the fruit were vastly diverted at my attempts. The head of the family, whom I recognized as a warrior in one of the proas (and, indeed, I could not help suspecting that I had cracked at him with the revolver), advanced with a broad smile on his face, and a knife with an immense blade, and with one tremendous slice took off the green top, which had nowhere hardened into a perfect shell, disclosing the inside like a cup filled with water. This I drank with great relish. The Malay spoke something to the girl, who brought another cocoanut, but evidently a ripe one, for the rind had split and was peeling off. One or two rapid twirls of the knife cleaned it off completely, and then, with a single blow, he split it in halves, and gave me one, giving the other to the little boy who had served as my introduction to his family circle. I took it with a profusion of thanks, whose purport he seemed to understand with dignified appreciation. On the bend of his arm there certainly was the scratch of some weapon, and I was more and more convinced that he was a man I had deliberately aimed at, and been particularly vexed at missing. And as I ate my cocoanut I felt secretly rejoiced that he was not going to use his broad knife on my head by way of retaliation.

CHAPTER IV.

I AM INITIATED.

ABOU soon after made his appearance, and, the sun being about to set, I followed him, in the hope that there would be some meat ; for, strange as it may seem, the diet of rice, fish, dates, etc., never satisfied me, and I was longing for more solid food. Abou led the way right up the hill to the rough-looking castle I had noticed, where we soon entered a narrow portal secured by a massive door. This brought us into the courtyard, where were piles of date-bags, great dubbhas of ghee (a kind of prepared butter), barrels of biscuits, boxes of dried fish, and on one side stabling and fodder. The courtyard was filled with Papuans and Seedis, who were eating their suppers with much enjoyment, chattering away like so many magpies. One or two Arabs were lounging about, who addressed a word now and again to Abou. Suddenly the sun set, and then followed an almost instantaneous darkening. Immediately a sentinel on one of the four small towers which stood at the angles of the walls shouted something in Arabic which I did not then comprehend, only I noticed that "Allah" was repeated many times. Every Arab at once prostrated himself on the ground and repeated his prayers, the ceremony lasting about seven minutes. When it was over, we went

into the building through another excessively narrow door, up a flight of steps, into a moderate-sized hall, where we formed parties of four, and squatted ourselves on the ground. Abou clapped his hands, and soon black Seedi servants appeared, bearing a huge platter of the eternal rice ; another of some fish fried in ghee, and hissing hot ; another of rice boiled in ghee, and colored with saffron, to which raisins were added. Everything was of admirable quality and well cooked, the rice being as well boiled as I had ever seen it at our mess in India. The fish was excellent, and I disposed of it in excellent style, with my right hand making up the balls as if I had been all my life at it, and breaking pieces of fish with great dexterity. This seemed to please the Arabs greatly ; and Abou, as a mark of special favor, made a ball of rice and popped it into my mouth, I swallowing it with the best grace imaginable. The pilaw with raisins was as good as anything I ever ate, and the servants brought us *alwa* to eat with it. This sweetmeat is an immense favorite in India, being imported from Muscat in Arabia ; and as soon as I saw it, I cried "Alwa !" to the great delight of my comrades. I described to Abou the fair at Bombay, which is held in the district of Bycolla, and how there were thousands of stands for the sale of this favorite sweetmeat. The Arabs listened gravely, and exclaimed : "God is great !" with much unction, at its finish.

When dinner was over, the servants brought in silver ewers and basins beautifully chased, but dreadfully tarnished and dirty. Each in succession washed hands and face, drying them in the air. Then we went outside on the hill, the night being very fine, and sat in a circle, smoking from a date-wood pipe which passed round and round, every one taking a few whiffs. The Arabs managed to fill their cheeks completely, and then expelled the smoke in equal volumes from each side. This I could not manage, and my failure seemed to be a subject for grave mirth. The servants then handed round little cups of the finest porcelain, which were without doubt once the property of some pigtailed victim. These were filled with such coffee as I never before tasted. It was black, it was bitter ; but it had a flavor and an aroma positively delicious. I shouted "Mocha !" and Abou patted me in a fatherly way on the cheek. Looking at me musingly for some time, he then spoke in Arabic to the others, who nodded their heads in assent and spoke, looking at me in a very friendly manner, as much as to say, "Ah, we shall convert him yet !"

This I determined to resist ; but I must confess that I began to like the Arabs very well, for they were to each other and to me like brothers. And I should have liked the way of life well enough if there had been more meat and less fish. Further, I must confess that I began to feel very

much like joining them, though this I must own was aiding and abetting in piracy. It was a thing to be despised and hated, and hunted down, and to be hanged at the yard-arm for. But it did not seem like piracy to me then : it seemed like being a jolly freebooter in the middle ages, living in a castle, and levying toll on the Chinese merchants. I was only seventeen, filled with romantic notions, and this life seemed so fascinating ; and, though I have since lamented this questionable morality on my part, the above reasons are at least honest.

The evening passed away. The beautiful stars, a thousand times brighter than they are in England, came out, and seemed to shed down radiance on us. The fragrance of myriad unknown flowers floated around us, and filled the air with its sweetness. The dinner, the pipe, and the coffee had made me perfectly at ease. In spite of my being a captive in a barbarous island and absent from my father, I was absolutely happy, and my senses seemed brimming with unknown joy. My eyes must have flashed and my face burned, for Abou noticed my excitement ; and I told him how happy I felt, and how grateful I was to him and to the others for the kindness I had experienced.

“My son,” said Abou, “happiness with us is not transient ; we are always thus. The storms that lash the ocean never penetrate here ; the typhoons that desolate the world are broken by our mountains. We are here secure from attack, both

by the difficulty of penetrating through the long and narrow harbor, which is filled with quicksands, and the invincible bravery of our chief and his Arabs. There are no noxious insects on this island, nor snakes, nor harmful animals ; but there are deer and game and abundance of birds, delicious to the palate. This is an earthly paradise. When tired of inaction we launch our proas, and we attack the enemy, as our forefathers have done, and we make their wealth our own. Then we return to our lovely isle, where our wives and children wait to give us a warm welcome. Believe it, young Giaour, there are no mortals so blessed as we."

"I feel it ! I know it !" I cried.

"Then make your petition to Nizam al Reis to join his tribe, and he will perhaps admit you. 'Tis true you are a prisoner, but you were taken by his sword, and you fought like a young falcon. He will admit you."

Carried away with the idea, I agreed to make my petition to the chief in the morning ; and with flushed pulse and excited brain I composed myself to rest among a mass of flowering shrubs of the most exquisite odor, soon finding the most absolute oblivion in the arms of Somnus.

Awaking early the next morning, I found the sky already reddening ; and as soon as the flaming disk of Sol showed itself, again came the hoarse cry of the sentry calling to prayers. I looked

around and saw my companions of the past night all deeply engaged in their devotions. In a few minutes I joined them, and proceeding to the courtyard we found a number of dusky slave-women milking numerous sleek-looking goats. In half an hour Abou brought me a basin of hot milk and a dhourra cake (a thin biscuit), which I found very good. The basin, by-the-by, was from the English potteries. Then Abou took me by the hand and led me into the presence of the Reis, who was in a small room very handsomely furnished with carpets and sofas, and with a splendid damask curtain hiding a door at the other end. There were trophies of weapons, chiefly swords and lances, on the walls ; but in the centre was a suit of chain-mail, with a skull-cap and steel gauntlets similar to those used by the Delhi cavalry.

The Reis was well dressed in Eastern style, and his girdle was a magnificent affair of heavy gold, richly chased and set with large turquoises. I made him a low bow, and he held out his hand, which I was about to shake ; only Abou whispered to me to put my right hand under it and so raise it gently to my lips, which I did. Then my guide explained in Arabic that I was desirous of entering into his band and fighting beside him instead of against him. On hearing this, Nizam al Reis bowed his head gravely, and asked if I were willing to become a Mussulman ; but, being determined not to change my faith, I thought it

best to temporize and say that I was unwilling to change my religion until I was satisfied that the Koran was better than the Bible. Being at present ignorant of Arabic, it was impossible to make a decision ; but that I would diligently study, and when I had attained a clear understanding in the matter I would let him know. This appeared to be satisfactory, and I retired in good order, Abou remaining with the chief. When he rejoined me he was in a state of high satisfaction, the Reis having made him a handsome present ; and, moreover, he had given him orders to equip me in Arab style from his stores, with tulwar, lance, canjear, and all things necessary for a full-blown Koreish. He was also to instruct me in the use of my arms, and to perfect me in Arabic and in the full understanding of the Koran.

The next three months were accordingly spent in constant exercise and tuition. I soon picked up a sufficiency of Arabic to converse pretty fluently, and each day saw me improve. I learned to handle the lance and to fight in Arab style with the tulwar, which in actual warfare necessitates engaging an opponent's weapon, and using the canjear with the left hand, avoiding his grasp by throwing the hand high up over his shoulder, and then stabbing close to the backbone, sending the blade right to the heart ! I read the Koran diligently, constantly raising doubts, which good old

Abou solved as he best could. From the Malays and Papuans I also learned to dive, and spent three weeks at the other end of the island, where there was a pearl-fishery which was worked by the slaves of Nizam al Reis. The divers, however, were freemen, who were paid good wages for their efforts. They could remain a long time under water, much longer than we could well believe in Europe. There was specially one man named Toma, who was a negro from Socotra, a huge fellow with an enormous chest, whom I have seen remain under water for two minutes and a half. The other divers called him the Fish, and he deserved the name. At my request he instructed me in the art of diving and of bringing up the pearl-oysters, and I accompanied him on many occasions, becoming quite an adept. At the end of the three months Nizam sent for me, and asked me if I was in earnest, and would fight fairly and squarely in his band. I replied: Yes; that I wished to be an Arab, to live like one, and to die, if need be, like one.

"It is well," said he, appearing pleased and at the same time thoughtful, as if my words had suggested some train of ideas; but dismissing them, he added: "I am going down into the village among the Malays; dress yourself in the rough clothes that Abou will give you; bring your Arab arms, and take this gun," giving me a superb English rifle, that was evidently intended to

carry either shot or ball. I obeyed his order implicitly, and, with the gun on my shoulder, in a short time joined the Arabs, who, to the number of twenty-five, were accompanying the chief down the hill.

The council which took place did not interest me, because it was in Malay, and I understood but little of it. But it did not last very long ; and at its conclusion I was told that next morning we should put to sea again, and that we were going to cruise in the Straits of Sunda. I received in charge the telescope, and was ordered by Nizam to keep a strict lookout, as the first discoverer had a better share than others in the booty.

CHAPTER V.

PIRACY.

NEXT day we started on our exciting if not exactly laudable occupation. Strange as it may appear, I did not feel a single qualm of conscience. My wound had completely healed, thanks to the care of my faithful friend Abou ; and the very novelty of the life I was now leading seemed to lend an indescribable charm to everything around. I felt somehow as if impelled by a resistless current toward some unknown, but unfeared, fate. I was fulfilling a destiny.

I wended down to the proa with my traps and arms with as much eagerness as if I had been preparing for a picnic to Elephanta. There was a pleasant wind blowing from the southwest, and we bowled along at a fair rate without using our oars. We passed between Celebes and Borneo without any adventures, passing sampans and proas, who saluted us amicably, on the principle, I suppose, that dog does not eat dog. The wind, however, soon freshened disagreeably, and we were obliged to bring to under the lee of a group of islands that are uninhabited, and which are strangely enough marked in the chart as reefs.

The gale shortly abating, we left the shelter of these islands and spread our matting sails. I was more and more disgusted with the proas, which are incapable of resisting a heavy sea or a head wind, are easily sunk, not very fast, and hold a very small cargo. I represented this to Abou, who agreed with me that the proas were poor craft, and depicted in glowing terms the merits of the Arab dhows and buggalows, though for my part they seemed to be clumsy too. My father, who served in the Peninsular War, had gone on half-pay after Waterloo, and then received the permission of the government to join the Peruvian Republic in its struggle for independence. There he had seen the craft called a *piroque*, not the tiny canoe of that name, but a schooner-rigged craft, very light, very buoyant, yet with considerable

storage-room. It seemed to me that we wanted something of the sort, and I began pondering on the possibilities of my making a great improvement in our marine, while I diligently swept the horizon with my glass. There was quite as much wind as we could manage, and the vessels we sighted would have been too much for us, so I simply notified to the Reis that they were in sight, and he made no announcement to his men, deeming it unnecessary. The third day and the fourth day passed after we left the islands, and we were still beating about the strait, when luckily toward evening the wind fell, and as the sun went down I caught a glimpse of three Chinese junks rocking to and fro. We made for them with exactly the same result as on the former occasion, only this time there happened to be on board a mandarin going to Cochin-China, in whose boxes we found strings of magnificent pearls and some costly furs. These last I begged for and obtained, as no one seemed to covet them. But they were so splendid that I took quite a fancy to them, and was willing to accept them as my reward for discovering the junks. While we were busily transferring the valuables, an idea flashed over me, which I communicated to Abou. What if we took one of the junks and converted it into a proa? Abou said it was slower than the slowest we had. I admitted that, but forced him to own that we could never capture anything but junks when there was a wind, be-

cause the proas could not fight a European vessel at a distance. But if we were in a junk, we could feign to signal for assistance, and they would let us come alongside. Then we could pour our men on their decks, cut and hack the rigging, and have them in our power in a trice. Abou said that there were plenty of piratical junks, and no vessel would allow them to come within a quarter of a mile. Still, being under the impression that Europeans never suspected the existence of *pirates* in junks, I suggested that the matter might be referred to the Reis Nizam, which was accordingly done ; and to my great content he sent for me and said : “ Son, do you know how to steer ? ”

“ Yes,” I replied ; “ the second mate taught me, and he showed me how to make the reckoning.”

“ Then, if I send you with Abou in this junk, can you find your way to Jezireh ? ”

“ Surely, Al Reis ; there is no great difficulty.”

“ Well, then, I am satisfied to send you with Abou, whom you must obey in all things ; and I know that if I trust you, you will not disappoint me.”

I was greatly pleased, and replied that he should have no cause to think otherwise than well of me, and that I would obey Abou as if he were Nizam al Reis himself.

This satisfied him, and he turned to Abou,

telling him to turn out all and sundry of the Celestials into the other junks, and to stand no outcry. If they did not hurry up, he might tell the Malays to take their heads. This caution was not needed, for the pigtails, as soon as they were shoved in the direction of the other junks, seemed to comprehend the situation, and speedily transferred themselves. But one fat old Chinaman, who, I suppose, was the owner of the junk I was about to appropriate, made a pitiful lamentation, and on being jostled from the vessel made a rush to the other side, and threw himself into the water, his long pigtail floating for a moment on the top. Soon we had the junk to ourselves; and after ascertaining that we had plenty of provisions and water, and that the treacherous crew had not scuttled the craft (of which act they were quite capable), we said adieu to our friends, and departed on a cruise of our own. The proas, not satisfied with the results of the day, still continued beating the Straits of Sunda, while we sailed boldly for the Straits of Malacca.

We had not a very large crew, having only fifteen Arabs besides ourselves and forty Malays. We had no Papuans, because they are not good fighters and are only fit to pull the oars. Our hope and expectation was to catch some Batavian from Java, and we reveled in anticipations of the surprise of the fat-headed Dutch. I had some lurking fear that we might meet a British vessel,

but I resolved, if it should so turn out, to try and persuade Abou that it was a man-of-war, which it would be madness to attack. But I was not reduced to the necessity of any such pious deception; for two days after we hauled away from the proas, we were overtaken by a large vessel, evidently Dutch. She fired a gun at us, to my great surprise, and I thought that we were found out; but Abou informed me that the Dutch merchantmen invariably pillaged the junks that were alone, and even sometimes whole fleets. This news put me into an excellent humor, as I thought how the biter was going to get bit. Our men all crouched under the bulwarks, their eyeballs gleaming, and their weapons ready in their hands. The ship fired again at us, but we kept right on, and even hoisted a small triangular sail above the chief one. This was immediately responded to by another shot, which plumped athwart our bows. We immediately yawed, and approached our friend, who discontinued firing, and who, when we were within some five hundred yards, dispatched a boat with an officer, to whom we threw a rope with due humility. The officer and the four sailors were at once secured almost before they touched our deck, and the junk gave another veer which brought her fairly alongside. No sooner had the vessel touched than with a tremendous yell our fellows were upon the decks, laying around them with desperate ferocity. I

found myself opposed by an officer of middle age, who, being a poor swordsman, was quickly disarmed and made a prisoner. In less than five minutes all was over, and our prisoners, to the number of twenty-eight, were tied hard and fast. We had hardly made so good a haul as we expected ; but I insisted that the prisoners should be released one by one and sent on board the junk, which should be given to them to go where-soever they chose.

Abou agreed, and his influence with the Malays carried the measure. Our loss from the surprise was small ; we had only seven of our Malays killed, and four Arabs wounded ; but the wounds were slight, and would be healed before we got to Jezireh ; so that the *coup* was a success from that point of view. After transferring our belongings from the junk to the merchantman, we transported our Dutch friends, still bound hands and feet, to the former, and then released one, giving him a knife and permission to release the others after we were clear. Then with joyful hearts we turned the vessel's prow to Jezireh.

The Malays had never been in a square-rigged ship before ; but luckily for me, most of the Arabs were good seamen, and able to steer ; so things were comparatively comfortable and easy, and Abou and I with light hearts commenced making a thorough investigation of our capture. But first he beat heavily upon the deck with a

handspike, which was a sort of summons for the crew, and informed them that the cabins were tabooed, and must not be entered by any one, being reserved for the Reis. And to make things sure, he got a hammer and some big nails, and fairly nailed up the doors of the great cabins. The saloon we reserved for ourselves, and the berths around it for our own special use. These little arrangements being made, we descended to the hold, and found that the vessel was laden with palm-oil, seeds and spices, bales of black and red cloth, sugar, and coffee. The Malays and Arabs were by this time busily engaged in examining the chests of the sailors in the forecastle and the cabins of the petty officers amidships, where, it must be confessed, they found little to reward them, though in the carpenter's bunk there was an abundance of tools of fine steel, which were eagerly divided. The armament of the Dutchman was unusually heavy, consisting of carronades, and a long gun amidships on a traversing platform. Had the ship not been taken completely by surprise, a fleet of proas could never have taken her even in a calm; for the long gun carried a shot of about forty pounds weight, which could have sunk a proa at a long distance; and being on a revolving platform, it could have been fired in every direction, which would utterly daunt the Malays and Papuans.

I felt a desperate desire to practise a little, so

as to teach the Arabs how to revolve the gun, point and discharge her ; but our position was rather too ticklish for any such amusements. As the captain's cabins were fast closed, we could not know much about her ; and if we were signaled by some other Dutchman, we should infallibly make some blunder, which would reveal our character. As it happened, we sighted several vessels, but did not come within hail of any one, making Jezireh without molestation or adventure. As we sped up the long and tortuous channel with a good wind blowing aft, we chuckled over the consternation which our appearance would cause, as no square-rigged vessel had ever been seen in that harbor. But we had reckoned without our host, for Nizam and the proas had got in before us ; and as soon as our top-masts appeared emerging from the channel, the harbor seemed alive with sampans, filled with screaming, shouting Malays and Papuans. Soon Nizam came in his great proa, and passed alongside, skimming up the ropes as nimbly as the most practised sailor. His eye lighted with pleasure as he glanced over the deck of the big vessel and noticed the carronades and the huge gun amidships. Running forward to salute him, he returned our salutation with evident approval. Abou told him in a few words of the manner of capture, the cargo, and the precautions we had taken to preserve inviolate the contents of the great cabin for him. He nodded, the

Arabs being very reticent, and invited us to dine with him that evening, an honor which we gladly accepted. Then we adjourned into the saloon and had coffee, all squatting upon the carpet except Nizam, who took the place of honor on the sofa, Abou slipping away to see after the mooring of the vessel ; which, if her draught allowed it, Nizam decided should be brought alongside the jetty and fastened fore and aft with big cables. The saloon was almost crowded with Arabs and Malays, all forming a huge circle around Al Reis on the sofa. I was commanded by him to take a place on the sofa beside him, cross-legged, of course, and relate the incidents of the capture at full length, which I immediately did, to the great gratification of the Arabs, who looked upon the affair as being specially their own, since I was an adopted son. Many were the ejaculations of approval and thankfulness which greeted me during the recital, and I really felt that it was the happiest moment I had ever known. After I had concluded, they began to discuss what was to be done with the cargo. Should it be divided, or should only a certain portion be divided, and the rest disposed of for silver in some Arab port ? I said : " O Nizam, I would advise you not to sell in an Arab port, but rather let us dispose of these goods in Goa, which belongs to the Portuguese ; for they have so little commerce since the English have taken India, that they will not bother us

with unnecessary forms, or oblige us to show papers to the harbor-master ; but we can bribe him with a bag of coffee, and all will be well—”

“But,” broke in an Arab in the circle, “they will pay in gold, and we would rather have silver. If we take these things to Aden or to Muscat, we shall be paid in heavy silver reals. We do not wish gold.”

Nizam chimed in : “I do not wish to impose my opinion as to what is to be done, though it is plain that here is ten times more coffee and sugar than we need after distributing to all that will use it, since the Papuans will not drink coffee, and the Malays very seldom. It is plain that we must dispose of the greater part.”

Everybody here chimed in with a guttural *hah*, which means assent. The Arabic negative is *la*.

“Are you all agreed to distribute what we can, and sell the rest ?”

Another chorus of hahs.

(Turning to me :) “My son, what else is there besides coffee and sugar ?”

“There are bales of spices.”

“Well,” said Al Reis, “will you distribute or sell ?”

“I advise, O Nizam,” said an old, tough Arab, who had often taught me the use of the tulwar, “that everybody be free to take what he requires from a portion spread on the deck.”

“Taib, taib !” broke from all quarters.

“What else is there ?” continued Nizam.

“There is palm-oil, and some dubbhas of ghee.”

“Much palm-oil ?”

“Not very much, Nizam. It is in barrels. I think there are thirty-three or thirty-four.”

“What do you say, Abdallah ?”

“I think, Nizam, there is too much to use, but not enough to sell. Let us distribute all but five barrels, and keep that for presents when we sell the other things.”

“Let it be so, then. Is there anything else, my son ?”

“There are hundreds of bales of black and red cloth, woolen cloth ; and that I think is all. Then there are, of course, the provisions, including the *sur ka gosht* (hogs’-flesh), which *we* don’t eat.”

I intentionally put an emphasis on the *we*, and it was perfectly understood, for there was quite a demonstration of hand-clapping ; and as the Malays laughed heartily, and everybody was in good-humor, it was resolved that the dubbhas of ghee should be for the Arabs, the pork should be for the Malays, and the Papuans should get a liberal share of palm-oil. In the midst of the general dialogue which ensued among the squatted group, Abou entered, and was at once invited to take up his position on the other side of Nizam, who, clapping his hands for silence, said that it would be best to give to each chief so many bales of red

and black cloth, which he would distribute in quantities, as suited himself. This was agreed to ; and the conversation then fell upon what was to be done, now that we were so strong and had so many guns. Nizam was silent, and seemed to be plunged in thought, and soon after rose up and dismissed the crowd. By this time we were safely moored stem and stern at the jetty. At a sign from Al Reis to Abou and myself to attend him, we went off gayly toward the Arab castle, Abou nudging me with his elbow to remark the chief's preoccupied air.

CHAPTER VI.

DINNER.

It was about noon when we arrived at the castle. The place was crowded with bustling servants, and it was evident from what was going forward that the dinner would be a grand affair. I felt more at ease among the Arabs now that I had made my proofs, as the French say, and chatted away freely to all the young pirates who were loitering about. There were not many, for the majority were down at the jetty, superintending the unloading of the ghee, palm-oil, spices, and as much of the other goods as was to be landed. While in the midst of an animated de-

scription of the Dutchman's astonishment when we poured over on his decks, a black Seedi slave announced to Abou and myself that we were to take our noontide meal with Nizam ; Abdallah, a cousin of Abou's, and an old Arab who acted as quartermaster on board Nizam's proa, were to be present also. Abdallah congratulated us on this. He said : " Feringhi [Englishman], you will certainly receive a big present ; a shawl perhaps, or a handsome tulwar, or maybe a pair of Arab pistols."

" Well," I said, " what will you get ?"

Abou answered for him : " Abdallah will get that slave Maime he has been hankering for."

At this there was a broad smile, and the accused answered back gayly : " If Nizam chooses, there is room in my house for her. Abou, what do you expect ? Piastres, or slaves, or a proa, or what ?"

Abou shook his head. " I make no calculations, and least of all do I expect anything so extravagant as a proa. But we shall soon know, for the muezzin must be close at hand, and after prayers we shall ascend."

Shortly after, indeed, we heard the cry which calls good Mussulmans to prayers ; and every one of those who had been chatting so gayly immediately knelt, bending the forehead to the ground nine times and repeating the attributes of Omnipotence.

We soon found ourselves in the reception-room of Al Reis, which was evidently decorated for the purpose. The floor had been covered with a fine Persian carpet of bright colors with quite a brilliant border, and a splendid praying-carpet had been spread over the old sofa. Al Reis was seated cross-legged on the sofa, and motioned us to take our seats on the soft carpet below, and receive food from his own hands. When I participated it was the last course of sweetmeats, and he told me that it was his intention to reward me far more amply than I could dream of, but that his future action was not yet quite clear before him. "But in future," said he, "you must have a room in my house, and I will appoint a slave to look particularly after you and to obey your orders."

When we had left the room, Abou beckoned to me that he had something of importance to say privately, so he led the way to the wild garden that surrounded the castle. It was a magnificent spectacle, though it was so little cultivated, for it seemed like a fragment of a tropical jungle which had been dropped by the hand of an enchanter on the naked hill. The place was full of strange fruits and flowers : bushes with huge blossoms as big as a peck loaf ; cacti for all the world like twining serpents, with the loveliest flowers ; trees twined together like lovers in the Arab style ; bowers of jasmine and wild grapes, date palms,

talipot palms, cocoa palms, areca palms, bamboo palms, toddy palms—palms everywhere, of which I do not know even the names. In one corner stood a huge tree, whose branches rose from the trunk about twenty feet from the ground, and then swept clear downward, making a perfect bell tent. There were cypresses, or something like them, with leaves of the darkest green, and oleanders as large as English lilac bushes. Even lilac bushes were here too, only they were large trees, fifty feet high, with slender, graceful branches. There were mango trees as big as an oak ; guava trees both white and red ; jack trees, as we used to call them in India, though I believe they are a kind of breadfruit ; and others with a stem as thin as the little finger, rising twenty feet in the air without a leaf, and terminating at the top with a circle of bright-green leaflets. Underneath these were hosts of curious flowers. One thing, however, was wanting—there was no grass.

Abou led me to one of these bowers of jasmine and wild grapes, and commenced : “ My son, didn’t you speak once of a kind of proa much faster than a proa, that was used among the Giaours ? ”

“ Yes,” I replied, “ if you mean the pirogue I spoke about a long time ago ; but you thought the proa best.”

“ I think so still,” said he ; “ but Nizam is

willing that you should build one, if you can, and he will give it to me for my own."

"Well, but what am I to build it of?"

"Whatever you like; you can take what materials you choose—you can have the pick of the whole island. You can do just what you choose. If you build it, I am to command it for myself; and whatever prizes I make, you shall always have the first and best share, you may depend on that."

"O Abou, I'll be glad to build it as well as I can, for the sake of all the kindness you have shown me, not for the sake of anything I can make of it. Only I don't know much about boat-building, though I remember what my father told me about the pirogues. You'll have to help me, and get the best proa-builders to help me; and then I believe I'll be able to turn out the fastest and the safest vessel that ever sailed these seas."

Abou here grasped my hands warmly, and began to dilate upon the splendid times we would have, and the prizes we would take, and what adventures we would seek when the pirogue was finished. I participated in his raptures, and looked forward eagerly to that happy time. I was quite on for the undertaking.

"Abou," I cried, "when shall we commence working at her?"

"We must wait," said he, "until the things

have been removed from the big vessel. That won't take long, for the best part will remain where it is now. Then, when all the Malays and Papuans have left, you can look around and take what you want. Then, when you have got your materials, you and I will begin as soon as Nizam has sailed."

"Sailed! Where is he going to sail to?"

"He is going to take the big vessel to sell the cargo."

"Why don't we go with him?"

"Because he does not take us. Besides, we shall have the boat to build."

With this unsatisfactory reply Abou departed, leaving me in the garden. I wandered around, delighting in the beauties of the place, listlessly plucking the flowers that arrested my notice, until I came to a spot that was all sombre, dark, thick evergreens, extending like a wall. For some reason—I don't know why—I determined to make my way through this dark huge hedge, and brushed through with determination, until I found my way absolutely and completely arrested by a towering fence of prickly-pear. I looked in vain for an outlet, but saw none; so I walked alongside the wall of prickles for some two hundred yards, when I came to a narrow opening in the fence of cacti. I marched in, and found a tortuous passage, very narrow, very winding, which I followed mechanically, being unable to see a yard before me, so short

were the turns. At length it broadened a little, and the passage became less winding, and I could hear in the distance something like a waterfall. As I got nearer, I could distinguish the sound as the plashing of a fountain. In a moment I heard women's voices talking in Arabic, and I felt a trifle scared, because I began to comprehend where I was getting to. I knew that if Nizam should find me, my head would leave my shoulders with terrible dispatch, and yet I could not resist the temptation to have a look. But I resolved to act discreetly; so I walked with the greatest caution, and on finding myself close to another narrow outlet, I lay on the ground, peeping through the screen of prickly-pear. There were three ladies dressed in the Arabic costume, reclining on the ground and smoking from a nargile or water-pipe, to which three tubes were attached. They were talking pleasantly about the prize that had been taken, and how the cabins had been nailed up by Abou, and no one knew yet what was in them. Two of these ladies were grown mature women, fine-looking, but rather fat. They had lovely eyes and beautiful hair. But the third was one of the most beautiful women I had ever beheld. Her face was a perfect oval; her hair was a bluish black, and full of natural ripples; her eyes were large, almond-shaped, and full of languid light. My breath came thick. My head seemed bursting, my blood on fire. I had the greatest difficulty in

keeping from rushing out into the pleasant garden where they were grouped around the fountain, and avowing my love on the spot. And yet at the same time I felt afraid. Something new had come to me. I was in love, and for the first time. My fate was before me, and all thoughts that I might have had of my father and my country were buried fifty fathoms deep under the flood of impetuous passion that rushed over my soul.

Soon they began to talk again. One who wore a scarlet silk caftan commenced joking Fatima about a screen. Her name then was Fatima. That was so much gained. I knew her name, and my eyes actually filled with tears of joy, because I knew how to think of her. Fatima! What a delightful name it was! Fatima! It had a sound of inexpressible tenderness!

One of the stout things commenced joking her about a screen.

“Fatima kisses the screen. Lula, will you believe it? Fatima presses her lips in the tenderest manner to the screen.”

“How do you know, Nerinda?” said the other fat thing, looking at the darling Fatima with a horrid smile.

“When my lord had his noonday meal, I just peeped through the curtain in his room, and seeing four men there, I modestly withdrew, when whom should I see but Fatima coming to the curtain and peeping through it! Then the poor

thing sighed, and pressed her lips to that old screen, and peeped again, and sighed. O Lula, what made her sigh?"

"Stooping perhaps, if her caftan was too tight."

"Perhaps it was, Lula, or perhaps it was the sight of the handsome Moussoul. He is only seventy, and his beard is not very gray, and his face is not much scarred."

"Or perhaps," chimed in Lula, "it was Abdallah, the martial, the heroic Abdallah, she was gazing on; Abdallah, who loves the greasy black slave Maime."

"No," continued the first speaker; "it was not Abdallah, and it was not Moussoul, for whom she sighed. It was good old Abou, who has two old wives, and wants a young one. It must have been Abou for whom the fair Fatima, the bright flower from the stem of the brave Nizam, pours unavailing sighs and kisses the screen."

"Of course it was Abou," rejoined Lula; "it must have been Abou, because it could not have been the Feringhi. It could not be the baby-faced Giaour. Could it, Fatima, dearest?"

To my intense delight, and at the same time to my grief and pain, the lovely girl burst into a passion of tears, and covered her face with her hands. The others laughed, and smoked complacently, chatting away on a thousand frivolous subjects.

I remained rooted to the spot. Was it possible that Fatima cared for me, and had seen me? I had noticed the curtain in front of the door in Nizam's room. It led then to the women's apartments, to the zenana. The two ladies who sneered at Fatima were then probably Nizam's wives, Lula and Nerinda. Neither of them could be Fatima's mother, for the eldest looked only twenty-one; and Fatima could not be less than fourteen, though among the Arabs there are mothers at thirteen. And Fatima loved me! Would I ever have an opportunity of telling her how I loved her? When Nizam was gone to sea, perhaps there would be an occasion. How I strained my eyes to look at the object of my sudden but intense love; and how I watched the heaving of her gentle breast, as she sobbed in uncontrollable grief! Soon she ceased to weep, and, rising from the marble pavement that surrounded the fountain, disappeared into the house, which was close at hand.

I stole away with a mind filled with the most delicious emotion, inwardly resolving that I would make known to the girl my sentiments. The way to do this was not very clear; but I was too sanguine of disposition to doubt for a moment the possibility of the attempt. When I emerged from the walls of cactus, which rose on each side to a height of twenty feet, I took the bearings as well as I could, and found that there must be

quite a considerable garden behind the prickly-pear which was sacred to the females of Nizam's household. It seemed to me that the pirogue which I was about to build would assist me very materially in any plans I might form with respect to Fatima, and I resolved therefore to plunge headlong into building, and seek every opportunity to revisit the garden without awakening suspicion.

Filled with these thoughts, I returned to the courtyard, where I found the greatest activity prevailing. There were fires everywhere, and sheep and kids roasting whole, poultry on spits and seething in pots, slaves rushing about full of importance ; in fact, the whole place full of turmoil. I watched the scene with amusement. Presently Moussoul, the old quartermaster, came up with a bright-looking Seedi boy of about fifteen, who was assigned to me by Nizam. His name was Bikur, and he salamed profusely, saying how devoted he would be, and all that sort of thing. I told him that if he would be a good servant, I would be a good master ; but if he wasn't, then I would return him to Nizam. Upon this he made more salams and protestations, and indeed seemed very anxious to win my approval. I asked old Moussoul where my room was to be, and found myself soon in one of the towers at the corners of the walls. This really was one of the pleasantest places that could be found, as there is eternal

summer there, and a cool place to sleep in is of the greatest importance. I found a large, strong trunk with a good lock and key, in which were the clothes given to me by Nizam at the noontide meal. And there were, besides sundry conveniences, a handsome sleeping-carpet, and an excellent pair of Arab pistols. The door was fastened by a huge wooden bar. There were no windows; but by leaving the door open the same object was attained.

I dismissed Bikur, and remained in my little room, monarch of all I surveyed. My first thought was to secure the door, and to take out my father's jewels from their concealment and stow them away in my box. I spread my carpet, and tried the effect. It was curious somehow, but I felt dissatisfied. While my life had been an adventurous one, I somehow liked it; but this approach to respectability, this room and box of my own, these two suits of clothes, one for holidays and feasts and one for business purposes, seemed too much like the European life that was gone, and suggested comparisons that were disagreeable. A room plastered with mud, with no windows, and no furniture save a carpet and a box, was not pleasant for one who knew what a room should contain. I must confess that my mind became filled with a train of despondent reflections, when the thought of Fatima came to nerve me to endeavor, and to give me an object powerful enough to dispel thoughts of

home, that actually for the first time intruded on me. I proceeded at once to don my holiday garments, stuck my sabre and pistols in my shawl, and descended into the courtyard just as the muezzin had called to prayer.

As soon as prayer was over, hundreds of torches were lighted; and the Arabs generally, and the Malays who were invited or had invited themselves, attacked the various good things that had been prepared *al fresco*. We who were the guests of Nizam followed him to the room where we had been on former occasions, I wondering where we should dine, as the room was not large enough to contain us all. But the curtain which I looked for had been removed, and we passed into a much larger room beyond, at the end of which was a lattice-work partition of bamboo, behind which we could see the indistinct forms of women. There were some thirty guests in all, including six Malay chiefs, whose religion does not seem to interfere with their eating anything and with anybody. For some reason Nizam desired to show them particular honor, so they messed in a circle with him. We, the four who had eaten with him in the morning, were by ourselves, and the others formed groups of four, and squatted where they chose. Then followed an endless series of pilaws, kabobs, kitcherries, roast-meats, sweetmeats, and fruits. At the end of every course we had sherbets, and the slaves sprinkled us with rose-water. It was

like being in the Arabian Nights. We had also a tiny speck of attar of roses in its pasty state stuck in the ball of our thumbs. This I believe is considered the acme of luxurious living. There were a few curries prepared, out of compliment to one or two Arabs who had lived in Hindostan, and I gladly seized the opportunity of eating food to which I had been so long a stranger. The way of eating was strictly with the right hand ; and when the roast-meats were brought I wondered how we should tackle them. But Abou just seized the bone with his left hand, and with inimitable dexterity tore a piece off with his right. To use the knife at a great feast is considered ill-bred, because the knife may be used for warlike purposes ; so with the roast-birds, which were brought round hissing hot on the spits ; each man tore off a wing or other portion with his right hand. For the curries we used our fingers.

When we had completed the repast, which must have lasted three hours, servants brought ewers and basins of water as usual, and then we had coffee and pipes. During the meal I stole as many glances as I dared toward the lattice, and my heart throbbed with deep joy when I caught the tender glance of a dark eye fixed on myself. I felt sure it was Fatima, and I vainly puzzled my brain for some way of communicating my sentiments ; but I could think of none, and the guests left the room before I had decided on anything.

I hurriedly went to my room, changed my gay attire, and, taking with me my sleeping-carpet, resolved to pass the night in the garden under the dark evergreens.

CHAPTER VII.

LOVE.

NIGHT-TIME at Jezireh was the most delicious thing imaginable. It was quite a luxury to breathe the air of that enchanting spot. Simple existence was happiness in itself. As I passed through the garden, the air was heavy with a thousand nameless perfumes, among which the Indian jasmine asserted itself as the strongest. I had thoughts of sleeping in one of the arbors twined with this plant and the wild grape, but I do verily believe the perfume would have suffocated me. I went on gathering handfuls of sweet flowers out of pure romance and ecstasy, and suddenly the thought flashed over me that I would make a bouquet and leave it beside the fountain. I did not know enough Arabic to make it symbolical; but I remembered that the almond-flower is a sign of marriage, because *fistek* (almond) rhymes with *yastek* (pillow); and two almond-flowers on one stem represent, in the language of signs, two heads on one pillow; and that was about all that I did

know. There was no moon ; but I was determined to find an almond-tree if I could by the smell ; and so I wandered up and down for hours, constantly coming across trees which I believed to be the right ones, but which turned out to be oleanders. At last I came across a veritable almond, and selected the most beautiful twin-blossom I could find. Around this I grouped some pretty blue and white flowers, and I made a background of dark-crimson leaves and another of green ferns. Then I hurried off in the direction of the evergreens, and made my way to the prickly-cactus hedge, through which I steered with great caution, as there was no moon. At last I came to the opening, and cautiously stole into the open space. There was light enough from the stars to discern everything dimly, and I made for the fountain without hesitation. Placing the bouquet at the edge of the marble pavement, I wrote as well as I could, in Arabic characters, the word *FATIMA* in the sand, devoutly praying to the god of love that she might be the first to come down. Then off I trudged, as happy as if I had found a diamond, and picturing to myself how she would find it, and press her lips to it, and perhaps write love-messages in the sand, and then erase them, looking guiltily around. And in this frame of mind I emerged from the garden, determined to sleep on board the vessel after all. When I got to the jetty, I found sentinels placed on board, who sa-

luted me respectfully, which I was very glad of, and made no objection to my entering the saloon, and spreading my sleeping-carpet on the table. I soon went to sleep, and dreamed all night of the Arab maiden.

In the morning I was aroused by Abou, who told me to hurry with my toilet, for that Al Reis was coming. If there are people in England who believe that Arabs are uncivilized, they are greatly mistaken ; for they wash repeatedly, and are extremely punctilious as to their nails, beard, etc. And I verily believe that this was one of the reasons why I was so great a favorite among them. Soon Al Reis made his appearance, attended by a couple of his spearmen, and saluted us both, we kissing his hand respectfully. He directed the spearmen to wait outside the cabin, and not to permit any one to enter under any pretext. Then he told me to open the grand cabin doors, which I quickly did with the claw of a big hammer ; and Nizam entered, followed by Abou and myself, all of us thrilling with curiosity. The stern cabins were much the same as others, except that there was a large cage of Java sparrows, all of which, poor little things, had been starved to death. Nizam patted Abou on the shoulder, and called him "Old Fidelity," since it was plain that Abou had not even glanced in for a moment before nailing up the doors, or the poor birds would not have been sacrificed so cruelly. There was a little room

at one end of the sleeping-room, which I knew to be the bullion-room, and I represented to Nizam that perhaps we had better look for keys in the writing-desk. He nodded assent; and sure enough there was a large bunch on a ring, one of which was a peculiar brass key of English or American make. I said that I thought this would prove to be the key of a safe or iron chest for holding money; and we all proceeded into the little room, where indeed was a safe, as I believed, with a great brass trade-mark on it of some New York company. I gave the key to Al Reis, and told him not to turn it, but to slip it in, and it would open. He did so; and the door of the safe swung open immediately, to his great satisfaction. He viewed the ponderous doors with surprise, and I am convinced was more delighted with the safe repository he had obtained for his treasures than with the treasures in it.

There were heaps of papers, which he handed to me and told me to read. I glanced at them. They were in Dutch, which I did not understand, and I handed them back to him. But he told me to keep them all, and perhaps I might make out something. We found divers boxes of small size, which were opened by various keys on the ring, and in one was a mass of gold mohurs, between four and five hundred, and several bundles of papers, which he handed over to me to make out. My heart gave a leap as I recognized English

bank-notes to a large amount, and Bank of Amsterdam paper also for many thousand gulden. Nizam took the box of gold, giving us each a handful, for which we made him many salams. We were all by this time in excellent humor, and Nizam was uncommonly gracious. I could have embraced him for Fatima's sake, and I did kiss his hand with such enthusiasm as both astonished and pleased him.

The next thing we examined was a common enough box of sandal-wood, on which were large seals. It had been covered with a wrapping of cocoanut fibre, which Abou had cut off with his knife. Nizam's eyes flashed fire.

"What seal is that?" demanded he.

"The Dutch East India Company's," I replied; "and it must be either precious papers or something of great value."

"Look about you, my children; I will return to the cabin and examine it there," said Al Reis, who did not wish to exhibit emotion before us, as he held evidently what the Dutchman had considered the most precious part of his cargo.

Abou and I found another box of gold and more bank-notes, which were at once intrusted to me, and which I carefully stowed away with the ship's papers. This exhausted the safe. But around in the bullion-room, which was sheeted with iron, were boxes of much larger size, full of seed-pearl, and bags of rupees and dollars, all in

silver. We hastened in to tell the Reis of our good fortune, and found him in a state of great perplexity. He had broken open the sandal-wood box and exposed to view a casket of polished steel, richly chased with gold. This he had endeavored to open with every one of the keys, and had failed. He was then trying to force it open with the point of his dagger, but fruitlessly. Leaving it with a sigh, he returned to the bullion-room to count the silver. There were eighty thousand American dollars, and fifty thousand rupees, all in bags of a thousand each. We handed him the box with the gold, and he ordered us to open our two hands, which he completely filled with coin. Then he gave us of the same measure five times of silver dollars, which we wrapped up in the linen kopra worn by Arabs, and which serves as a sheet at night-time. The seed-pearl he said he would sell at Muscat, or perhaps at Bushire in Persia, or at some port in the Gulf of Oman. He offered us some ; but what could we do with seed-pearl ? So he promised that he would remember us in the sale. Clapping his hands for a slave, he said he would order midday meal for us all on board ; but no slave appeared, which made him angry. So, going into the saloon, he shouted : “ Balu, Honua, Byagi ; ” and shortly Malays and Papuans came running. But the sentries would not admit them ; at which piece of obedience Nizam remembered his order, and was

well pleased, giving to each spearman a piece of gold. He ordered one of the black fellows to send for his Arab cook, and order him to prepare food on board the ship. Then we returned to the cabin, and Nizam asked particularly if I could make anything out of the papers. I said that I could make out the name of the ship, because it was printed in Roman characters, not in the Dutch character, and was a Greek name, Antigone, but that was about all. At this he seemed disappointed. He thought for a moment, then said: "My son, and you, Abou, whom I love above all my Arabs, there is surely here some great thing. I am not one of those foolish ones who believe in charms and spells and in magic caskets. Nevertheless, here is a casket which I do not see how to open, nor indeed can I see a keyhole. The secret to open this must be in the papers. Look for yourselves."

We examined the casket, Abou first, and I afterward. Abou shook his head. When I saw it I gave a cry, for I recognized one of those curious locks which open by a secret word. Arranged in a circle were all the letters of the alphabet, and out of them by transposition was to be formed a word which would open the casket. I explained this to Al Reis, who comprehended it at once, and promised me a large reward if I could find out the word. "But," said Al Reis, "there are twenty-four letters. Only think how

many combinations might be made. Just think of it. I have heard of these things before, and the name is never written. The man who has it has to remember it."

Then he promised me anything that I might ask if I would persevere and go through all the papers.

"But, highness," I broke in again, "how am I to know when I am right unless I have the casket? I must try every word with the letters themselves."

"No, no ; I will try myself."

"But you can't understand Roman letters."

"I will learn. My daugh— I have some one who can teach me."

I did my best not to look thunderstruck, but I fear I made a very poor attempt. So I promised that I would make out a list of words for him ; but I tried to convince him that the hope was futile, as the twenty-four letters contained every possible word in every possible European language. Nevertheless, I would examine the papers carefully.

The meal was brought in, and we had a merry one. Nizam told us his projects for the sale of the cargo ; how he would be obliged to go to Arabia, not so much to dispose of the cargo, but to get Arab recruits in sufficient numbers to have a full crew for the vessel, which he dubbed the Shark. Abou and I were to remain behind, and

build a pirogue according to my ideas; and I was to examine the papers thoroughly, to gain the clew to the word. He intended, if possible, to get a hundred Arabs, which would give us a complete control of the pirates. His present power was founded on his knowledge and his bravery, the Malays being alone six times as many as we were. With a hundred more he would feel in security when he was away. Abdallah, whom he relied on greatly, and Moussoul would command his proa, which would be manned with a few Malays and Papuans; while to Abou and to me he would commit the safety of his castle and his possessions. He relied on us to keep the pirates on friendly terms, and to conceal all knowledge of the silver on board. The gold he intended to exhibit, and the seed-pearl. The silver we must put in the safe and fasten. Then we would lock up the bullion-room, and say nothing about its existence; and by putting a curtain in front of it, the Malays would take it for the zenana, and would ask no questions.

This we did accordingly; and Nizam sailed in the Shark, taking with him the greater portion of the Arabs. Then Abou and I set resolutely to work at the pirogue, being daily surrounded by curious Malays, to whom we explained our intentions. Some thought the proas they made better; others were taken with the novelty of the pirogue; and when I assured them that she would beat a big

vessel sailing with a moderate wind, they would have gone to work immediately, and made imitations of the one we were engaged on, if the head-chief, Tamula, had permitted. But he, being a prudent man, told them to wait and see how one would turn out before they adopted an untried idea.

Meanwhile I went every morning before day-break with a bouquet, which I laid near the fountain. Some one took them away regularly, which gave me strong hopes that Fatima was aware that I loved her. I had purposed originally to wait until Tamula set off on an expedition with the proas, which would rid me of the supervision of Moussoul and Abdallah. Good old Abou never said to me, "Where goest thou?" or "Whence comest thou?" but those two I fancied looked after me a trifle more than was friendly. I believe now that this was imagination, but at the time it irritated me. One morning, however, I determined, whatever happened, to wait and see who took my bouquets. I made one as beautiful as I could, deposited it in the usual place, and retired with beating heart to the edge of the prickly-pear hedge. The sky was soon all rosy with red clouds, and a warmer flush stole through the air, and a twitter of birds awoke in all the branches. Soon up came the cheery sun from the depths of the sea, and a flutter of life arose down in the Malay town. My

heart came to my mouth as a vision of light garments came tripping from the door of the house, and the beautiful Fatima came direct to the bouquet, and seizing it with a glad cry, pressed it to her bosom and to her lips. Her hair was all loose, flowing down her perfect form ; her eyes were bright with youth and happy love, and there was a look of eager, fond expectation thrown around the garden, as if in search of some one, which thrilled me to the core. I could endure silence no more, but left my covert, crying softly : “ Fatima ! Fatima ! ” She turned at the cry, and gave one long look, and then ran to meet me, all love and joy. We embraced with the utmost passion ; and while the words “ I love you ! ” trembled on my lips, she anticipated me, crying : “ Ah love ! I love you ! ”

With the instinctive caution of an Eastern girl, she retreated with me to the covert of the hedge, and there behind the cactus gave full course to her affection. I replied as ardently, and we confided to each other how we loved from the first glance. An hour of this heavenly intercourse passed like a moment, and we parted with mutual pledges to meet again that evening. When I went down to the jetty near which our pirogue was building, I found Abou and our workmen in full swing. I determined to spare no pains to hurry on the completion of this vessel, as I foresaw that I might want to elope with the daughter of my

chief, and the pirogue would exactly suit. She was to be made principally of stout bamboos, the calking to be of India-rubber below the water-line, and above of cocoa fibre. Her lines were to be like an English schooner, and she was to have two broad lug-sails, with foresail and jib. The deck was to be flush, with grooves for the fitting of powerful sweeps, to be pulled in a calm; and below was to be a large saloon with a great stern cabin. Such was the programme. The timber we wanted had been partly taken from the Dutch vessel, with spars, sails, and cordage; and as we could not have a wheel, we were to have a tiller.

Having now a new impulse for working, I went at it like a giant, and assisted with an enthusiasm which delighted Abou, who—may I be forgiven—thought that it was from friendship to himself. Old Moussoul came down and nodded approbation; and now that we were working on the flush-deck, things began to look a little more ship-shape. I told him that we wanted sadly a wheel and a capstan, and entreated him if he came across any European vessels on the next cruise to bring them along. I showed him how we would arrange the planking so as to fit in the capstan when it came, and cautioned him not to take a big one, but only from some vessel of about four hundred tons. Though this would still be above our size by far, yet there are few vessels of smaller size in the Eastern seas, and this he knew. He told me that

he would not forget, and that arrangements were then pending for a cruise in a few days, which I was exceedingly glad to hear.

In the evening, after dinner, Abou wanted me to sit and sip coffee while Abdallah told Arab stories, in which he was very accomplished, and could recite the Seven Poems of the Moallakat and the feats of Antar so long as breath remained. I was usually very glad to hear him, but this time I excused myself on the ground of a headache, and retired, Abou thinking that it was from working too hard, and cautioning me from abusing my strength and endurance. Immediately I made for the place of rendezvous, and there found my darling, who flew to my arms with such fervor that I involuntarily shed tears of happiness. On perceiving this tribute to her charms, she gave me a heavenly smile, which even the starlight could not hide, and we were at once deep in mutual confidences. I told her all about myself and my life with the Arabs ; and she told me that her mother was a European whom Nizam had captured, and whom he had made his wife and the chief of his zenana. She pined away, however, and died when Fatima was only three years old. Nor did the dear child know what country she belonged to, but she remembered two words which her mother used to say : “ Anima mia.”

“ Anima mia ! ” cried I ; “ why, that may be Spanish or Italian.”

“What does it mean, love?”

“It means ‘my soul.’”

Here Fatima laughed a delicious ripple of music, and said: “You then are my *anima mia*.”

“And you mine.”

“Ah, dearest Feringhi, I cannot speak your name as you can mine. Teach me to say it.”

Then we tried. She could not say Charles; she would say Tsarlis and Sarl; but she could not arrive at the name; so I taught her to say Carlos, which I told her was the way her mother would pronounce it, and that it was the same thing.

Thus fled the happy hours of newly-dawned love, during which I told her about the pirogue I was building; and how, if her father would not consent, we would take it and run away. The answer to this was a pressure of the lips, and the words—whispered in the sweetest voice that ever woman had: “Carlos, *anima mia*, where you go, I will go; what you do, I will do; what you worship, I will worship; and when you die, I will die. Take me, Carlos, for I am yours.”

CHAPTER VIII.

STRATAGEM.

MY time was now pretty well taken up. All day I worked away with the Papuans (who proved to be exceedingly skillful boat-builders) at the pi-

rogue, and at nightfall I passed delightful hours with Fatima. I taught her English in part, and the principles of Christianity, which she accepted with eagerness, and vowed to follow. Day by day the necessity of eloping grew more clear, as Nizam would never give me his daughter unless I became a Mussulman, which, since I had known Fatima, I was firmly resolved against. In fact, I had about made up my mind to steal the pirogue when finished, make off with what I possessed and my darling girl, and make a dash for Australia. There were charts and maps in the Shark's cabins, and when Nizam came back, I could get them on some pretext. The pirogue when finished would require very few hands to sail it, and I could easily get Papuans to accompany me without much scruple ; all I had to do was to hurry, to continually hurry the workmen.

Moussoul and Abdallah started with the proas along with Tamula, the head-chief of the Malays ; and then work had to be slacked a trifle, for the best men were gone ; and pursuant to Nizam's instructions, one of us, either Abou or myself, had to make rounds, in a friendly, unconcerned way, among the men who were left, and take charge of the castle. This was not so bad, as, by the chief's order, Abou and I took our meals in the little room where the chief usually sat, and I knew that bright eyes were peeping at me through the screen, and a warm heart was beating responsive to mine.

But I agreed with Fatima that she should never, by word, look, or token, in any way allow any one to guess at our intimacy and our meetings. Old Abou, good old soul ! often spoke to me of being absent-minded, and thought that my mind was dwelling on my own people. On these occasions he would dilate on the happiness of the Arabs, and how they were the masters everywhere on land and sea. I listened to him with pleasure, but the anxiety told upon my spirits, and I grew thin and pale. It was not for myself I feared, but for one now dearer to me than existence, and I could not but understand how dangerous discovery would be for her as well as for me ; for, though our attachment was most innocent, and I solemnly regarded her in the light of one who was pledged to be my wife, yet I understood by this time the Arab nature perfectly well, and knew that it would be Mohammedanism or death.

We had, by the time the proas returned, completely finished the pirogue, save the steering apparatus. Moussoul had kept his word partly ; he brought a wheel, but no capstan, which, however, we contrived to do without. We went to work vigorously, now having more time and better assistance, and in another week had her completely rigged. Nizam had now been gone many weeks, and we became anxious for his reappearance ; and Abou held a grand consultation with myself and the other two head Arabs. Various things were

suggested ; but Abdallah at last hit upon the truth—namely, that Nizam was enlisting more men than he had intended, picking them up in small parties in the towns along the Arab coast. Moussoul warned us to be on our guard. The Malays were in bad temper, for the prize they had taken had been laden with tea. A great many had been killed, and the vessel, which was French, would have beaten them off, but for the personal bravery of Abdallah and the few Arabs who were with him. It now behooved us, as the friends and confidants of Nizam, to watch and see that the Malays did not storm his castle, which they believed was full of treasure. They had been whispering among themselves that the Shark contained huge treasures, which Nizam had kept for himself, and that he had sailed away never to return.

This was bad news, and I saw Abou look very grave. It was plain that it was false, since it was known that the females of his household were in the castle ; and, had he abandoned us, they would have gone with him. He would also have taken his best Arabs ; whereas he had taken good fighters indeed, but had left those in whom he had the greatest confidence. “Look here,” said I, “good friends—for we are all good friends, are we not ! friends of our absent chief, and friends of each other. This is what I propose : We will go all of us separately among the Malays, complimenting them, and saying that we have always bad luck

when Nizam is gone. And we will make them all small presents. And I will propose to Tamula to make him a pirogue like this one of Abou's, that's nearly finished. We launch her to-morrow, and we will take him and the other chiefs, and have a feast."

"Good, good!" cried Abou. "I told you always that this boy was a well of wisdom."

"That's not all, Abou. We will have races."

"Why, we have no horses."

"I don't care for that. We will have a race of proas, with presents for the chief; and we will enter with the pirogue, and have prizes, first and second. Tamula is sure to be slow, but we will let him win. Then we'll have races for Malays and Arabs only in swimming, and give a handsome prize; and a race for sampans for the Papuans, and give one of the barrels of palm-oil. Then they'll think so much about the races that they will forget to manœuvre against us until Nizam comes home; and there will then be so many of us that we can eat them, if it wasn't against the Prophet's law to eat the flesh of swine."

I never saw men so tickled by a poor joke. Abdallah seized my hand and nearly crushed it in his grasp. He was a tall fellow, with gigantic proportions, and as brave as a lion. Old Moussoul agreed to give the prizes from the chief's store, and to get from the household, through the female servants, a rich shawl for the first prize, and

gold bangles for the second prize for the proas. For the swimming prize the object chosen was a matchlock ; and for the Papuans a barrel of palm-oil.

We got up from the conference with great cheerfulness, and Abou went to look after the launch. Moussoul went up to the castle ; and Abdallah and I started to pay a visit of ceremony to Tamula. He received us graciously enough ; and we told him of our intentions, and asked his assent, as he was nominally our superior during Nizam's absence, though in reality the Arabs were quite independent. He caught at the idea eagerly—for the Malays are frightful gamblers—and immediately offered a heavy bet that his proa would beat us all.

Abdallah said ; “ The Feringhi's proa is completed and being launched, and he means to enter it too.”

“ Let him, let him,” he cried ; “ all the better. Will you take my bet ? ”

I answered : “ Yes, sahib, I will ; but you must let me use sail.”

“ Use sail, oar, everything ; I will use the same. Is the vessel launched ? ”

“ No, sahib,” I answered ; “ but it is just about to be launched.”

“ We will go and see it,” Tamula cried, jumping up, and immediately making long strides for the beach.

We got there in a very few minutes, for the Malay town is close to the shore ; but Abou was too quick for us, and the pirogue was afloat in the water. Her appearance in the water was charming. She seemed to nestle down in the sea as if it was her natural element ; and I felt sure she would make a good sailer. There was a light breeze stirring, and so, jumping into a sampan, I was soon on board of her. Abdallah, Tamula, and one or two Malays followed ; and we soon had the lug-sails and fore-sail set and were gliding across the harbor in fine style. The wind was southwest, and we sailed about to our hearts' satisfaction, making better time than even I anticipated. We seemed to glide through the water ; and I showed Abou that we left no wake at all to speak of, whereas the proas leave a wake as broad as a mill-stream. Abou was delighted. I too was delighted, and even Tamula seemed pleased.

"Feringhi," said he, "I won't bet if you use sails. My bargain is only on condition that you use no sails in the race."

To this I agreed, and said that we would require four days to get the pirogue ready for the race, because we had to arrange benches for the rowers in the grooves, and to make ready oars or "sweeps" large enough.

Tamula assented, and we went below in high good-humor. It proved rather too hot there, so we had our meal on deck, and sat in the shadow

of a sail, enjoying ourselves hugely. Tamula seemed certain that he could beat us, and I thought he could too ; but the pirogue was wonderfully light and buoyant, and with four men at a sweep I thought we could show them something. The next point was to make the Papuans sing. They are regular darkies ; and dear old Captain Orde used to say that without a song a nigger couldn't pull against a fly ; with it, he could haul against a rhinoceros. So, while Abou was arranging the oars, I got a lot of Papuans, and began to teach them a medley. I could not for the life of me remember the words, but the chorus went : " Hilo boys, hil-lo ! " The rest of it is unimportant, and can be supplied with any gibberish ; so I filled in with Papuan, and taught them to pull strong and slow to the words " Hilo boys, hil-lo ! " There is instinctive time and melody in the poor fellows' composition, and they took to it wonderfully kindly. We pulled away at this slow and steady, and then I taught them another which had a chorus of " Walk away." This was much faster, and I soon got them to pull tremendously.

But this took some time, and I had twice to get the head chief Tamula to put off the race, until by this procrastination ten days had passed by, and we expected Nizam would arrive every day.

Still he did not make his appearance, and the

day of the race came. Moussoul had got ready the prize of a shawl and gold bangles from the women, and their curiosity was intensely aroused to see so novel a spectacle. It is a fact that there was not a soul there who had ever seen a race before of any description, and they were enthusiastic about it ; so, to oblige them, Nizam's proa was withdrawn from the race, and conveyed the ladies closely veiled to the turn in the harbor where each proa had to come. In fact, it became a kind of stake-boat, which the others had to round.

The first race was the swimming, mile out and mile in, which was won by a young Malay, one of our most dangerous foes. As he walked triumphantly away with the matchlock, I could plainly see that he was no longer dangerous, and that we might count him among our best friends.

Then came the proa race, for which we took our place in a line. Moussoul started us with a matchlock, and Tamula got ahead at once, followed by the other proas. We were last, singing our "Hilo boys, hil-lo !" keeping about a hundred feet in the rear of old Tamula, and going so beautifully that Abou was in raptures, and whispered to me that we could win. We, however, agreed that it was not prudent, and that we should make enemies by winning ; though for my part I own that I had not bargained on Fatima's presence, and I hated the idea of being beaten before her.

Three proas soon fell off, but two others kept abreast with Tamula by considerable exertions, and we remained a hundred feet in rear. One mile, two miles, three passed by in this situation. There was one more mile to the stake-boat where we had to turn, and still there was no sign of fatigue in our fellows, who chanted cheerfully, but were evidently getting excited. Half a mile more, and one of the proas fell back level with us, and tried for a moment to get in front of us ; but we put on a little extra pull, and passed her so quick that they stared and shouted. This brought us up nearer to the leading proas. There was a considerable space between them, as Tamula had chosen the right of the line, which would bring him nearest to the turning-point. Gradually we got nearer and nearer Nizam's proa, and could see the ladies under an awning. They were closely veiled, but for all that they waved handkerchiefs. My pride was touched : considerations of prudence forsook me. "Abou, I can't stand being beaten," I cried. "Walk away, boys."

Our Papuans at once took up the chorus, and that was the last of the race. The pirogue was as light as a cork and beautifully cut. There were ten sweeps with four men at each, pulling in the most perfect unison. When they started that chorus, they increased their pace, and began to shout it like incarnate fiends, pulling like Samsons. We shot between the leading proas like a ghostly

vessel, and then past the stake-boat with a tremendous cheer ; then we rounded her, Abou steering like a born yachtsman, and came on the homeward track, yelling our gibberish and our " Walk away " at the very top of our lungs. The proas, as we passed, being quite out of the race, halted and shouted ; but we never eased until we had put a clear mile between us and old Tamula, who was second, leading the third by about two hundred yards. Then we relaxed a trifle, and came in winners to " Hilo boys, hil-lo ! " the darkies being very little distressed. Abdallah, when we returned, hardly knew whether to be vexed or pleased ; but one thing was very certain—the pirogue was a great success. In about ten minutes' time Tamula made his appearance, the darkies blowing like porpoises. He took his beating admirably, which I was very well pleased to see, and received the gold bangles with a very good grace, only stipulating that I should build him a white man's proa. This, with a mental reservation, I agreed to do, to his great satisfaction. The shawl was adjudged to Abou, who gave it to me, for which I thanked him heartily, being convinced that I should find in it some token from my darling.

The last race was the sampan race, in which Bikur, although a Seedi, had obtained permission to enter. I told him that he ought to be ashamed of mingling with the Papuans, as he was a Mo-

ammedan negro ; but, as he pleaded hard, I permitted it, having always in my head a design to ingratiate myself with the Papuans, as I had resolved to get a crew for the pirogue out of them for my elopement. Abou ordered our men to row us up alongside Nizam's proa, which they did, while I took the opportunity of going below into the cabin and examining my shawl. Pinned up in a corner I found a double almond blossom, which Fatima had put there. This I took as an omen that she would assuredly be my wife ; and I returned to the deck in the brightest of humors. As we came alongside I managed to catch Fatima's eye, and could read in it how delighted she was at our success. Then there was a cry of "Ho, ho, ho !" and at the last yell the sampans started ; the contest—the last on the list—being decided in favor of a Papuan who belonged to Tamula's proa.

This ended the races, which we wound up by a tremendous feast, during which Tamula had a long conversation with me about the proa I was to make for him, and gave me, in token of his satisfaction, two armlets of pure gold.

CHAPTER IX.

NIZAM.

WHEN I left the festivities among the Malay huts, I impatiently sped up the hill toward the castle, hoping that I should not be too late to see my *fiancée*. What was my astonishment, as I glanced instinctively to seaward, to see the topmasts of a square-rigged vessel emerging from the channel into the open harbor. The next moment I knew that it was Nizam returning, and hoping, in all probability, to catch us napping, which he would certainly have done had it not been for my stolen interviews with Fatima. There was barely time for me to rush to the fountain, clasp my charmer to my arms, receive her congratulations, and warn her that her father was in the harbor. Then, with a hasty adieu, I tore myself away with a heavy heart, and returned to arouse all the Arabs, and get them together quietly and without giving any information to the Malays, who I resolved should have a good startling, just to give them a wholesome fear of Nizam, present or absent. Stealing away silently, we armed and equipped ourselves, manned the pirogue, loosened the sails, and steered directly for the vessel. Running alongside, we hailed them in Arabic : “ What ship’s that ? ”

"The Shark. What ship are you?"

I replied, for the joke's sake: "We have no name;" and then, after a pause: "We're waiting for Al Reis to give us one."

A voice cried: "Is that my Feringhi?"

"Yes, Nizam."

"Is Abou there?"

"I'm here, Al Reis."

"And Abdallah?"

"Here too."

"And Moussoul?"

"All here, Nizam."

"Come on board."

We went on board, and were surprised at the transformation. The Shark now bore the appearance of a man-of-war rather than that of a merchantman, guns being arranged methodically on each side of her decks, while the forty-pounder had been transferred to the quarter-deck as a stern-chaser. Nizam was standing beside it, and welcomed us warmly, kissing me on the cheek, which was an immense mark of regard. He questioned us as to the new craft and its capabilities, and heard Moussoul's account of the bad temper of the Malays, and their plotting against him, with ill-concealed anger. He smiled at the account of the day's transactions, and said that hereafter such things would be unnecessary as stratagems, but would be serviceable as diversions. We were now come abreast of the jetty and about a

hundred yards from it, and he gave the signal for anchoring. Yet not a head stirred among the Malay huts. Then Nizam whistled shrilly, and immediately the men came tumbling up from below. I should think there must have been on board nearly three hundred. They were all armed in Arab style, with tulwar and pistols, and made a splendid appearance.

In a moment they manned the guns, and at Nizam's order fired a broadside, which made the hills echo for some minutes. It was like stirring an ant's nest with a stick. In a trice the Papuans and yellow-skinned Malays came hurrying out from their sleeping-holes, stark naked, but with weapons in their hands. We in the pirogue shot ahead, the wind serving, and anchored close to the shore, shouting to the men not to be afraid, for it was Nizam's salute in honor of Tamula. Immediately twenty sampans dashed into the water, and the Malay chiefs and warriors soon scrambled up the lofty sides of the Shark, and found themselves on her deck in presence of Nizam and his crew. I think Tamula's heart must have failed him, for he knew what he had been devising; but he was perfectly unembarrassed, and welcomed Nizam back with the utmost cordiality. Then occurred an act which impressed me, more forcibly than any other I had witnessed, with the terrible powers of our great chief. Nizam looked grimly at him, and without further

parley ordered his immediate execution ! Then he called for his boat and was pulled calmly ashore, ordering myself and Abou to attend him closely, and leaving Abdallah in charge of the Shark.

My sensations going up the hill were not the most pleasant, and there was something sticking in my throat which almost prevented me from speaking when Nizam addressed me. He perceived my state of mind, and attributed it to the act of summary vengeance which I had witnessed. This made him treat me all the more kindly, and he chatted in the most friendly, even paternal way. When we arrived at the castle, all the spearmen were outside waiting for him, and they gave him a wild Arab cheer. He passed on in great good-humor to his room, dismissing us with the kindest words and promises of reward on the morrow.

Abou wanted to talk about what we should get, but, perceiving my abstraction, seemed hurt at it, and said that a good friend of the Reis should be pleased at Tamula's death, and not shocked. I pleaded my early education, which was too strong for me at the moment, but promised in the morning I would think as he did. So we parted, and I retired to my tower full of forebodings. I could not help thinking that perhaps my clandestine meetings with Fatima might have been witnessed by some slave, or by Nizam's

wives, who, for some reason best known to themselves, had allowed the thing to go on. The Arabs are so subtle, so reticent, you can never tell what a man feels when he is looking at you. His face may wear the kindest, friendliest look, at the very moment that he is plotting your death. What would happen to Fatima, whom I adored? What vengeance would her father take? Would he kill her? Or would he be satisfied with my death? I tortured myself pondering these things, and revolving them over and over, lamenting my folly in not carrying off Fatima at the time the pirogue was completed. And in the midst of these reflections I fell asleep.

My dreams were horrid : I dreamed that Fatima was starving, chained to the mainmast of the pirogue. I was striving to convey food to her, and Nizam was aiming at me with the great stern-chaser. Again, Fatima and I were wandering over a pathless desert, dying of thirst. We saw a well, stooping beside which was an old dervish. He presented a goblet of crystal water to Fatima, and, as she grasped it, the dervish changed to Nizam, and stabbed her to the heart. I awoke trembling, and found my forehead bedewed with great drops of perspiration. It was still dark, but there was a sighing sound going over the mountains and the sea which told of the coming dawn. I hastily descended to the courtyard, where the sentinels, knowing me well, saluted and allowed

me to pass without comment. In the harbor beneath me the forms of the proas along the strand were all dark and jumbled together ; but the pirogue and the Shark, being by themselves, stood clear out against the starlit sky. There was just such a breeze as suited the pirogue. With Fatima on board I could defy the world in arms. But now it was too late. Nor do I hesitate to avow that I was unmanly enough to shed bitter tears at the thought that perhaps I might never see her again.

My head fell upon my breast, and I remained for some moments a prey to despondency. I arose with a start, for I could hear a humming noise like bees swarming in the Malay huts, and could faintly discern movements of small black objects. The Malays were preparing for a night attack, to revenge their chief and to pillage the castle. The snake was scotched, not killed. I called a sentry, softly bidding him speak under his breath, and told him to listen. He put his ear to the ground and nodded comprehension. I told him at once to alarm silently all the men in the courtyard, and I would go and alarm Nizam.

The man faltered : " Sahib, Nizam has retired."

" I know it ; but he must be roused. Obey, and question nothing."

With this, I flew up the stairs and passed through the little room into the large chamber where we had feasted. I penetrated through

another smaller room, and found myself at the curtains of the zenana. To pass here was death. I called loudly "Nizam!" I repeated the cry several times, and at last Al Reis appeared, sword in hand. He looked at me steadily, and heard me without a word. "Wait," said he, when I had completed my story. In a few minutes he returned, dressed and armed, and descended with me to the courtyard.

The men were bustling about, though with caution. Abou was outside watching.

Nizam listened intently, and heard the murmur of the enemy. He studied for a moment, then led me aside.

"Feringhi, I know all. I know that you love my daughter, and have seen her. Were you an Arab, I would slay you as you stand; but you have other laws, and your ideas of women are different from ours. Now listen. There are, as you see, but few men, and we cannot defend this place against a night attack, because they know its weak points, and their force will be everywhere, and will distract the attention of so few defenders. Swim to the Shark at once—at once; if you take a sampan they will hear it. Swim under water, come up to breathe only, and direct them to aim at the Malay town and fire repeated broadsides. At the same time, let a hundred men, well armed, come off in boats, and take their position at the bottom of the hill near the jetty. Do

this, and we will talk about Fatima afterward. I do not say that she may not be yours."

I listened with varying emotions to this speech ; at the end I kissed his hand with a devotion that words cannot express, and glided downward in the darkness to the jetty, dropping into the water as silently as I could. Then I commenced my swim of a hundred yards under water, which, adroit as I had become in pearl-diving, was a comparatively easy task ; nor did my head emerge many times before I found myself alongside the Shark. I signaled beneath my breath for some time without response, and it was only when I imitated the noise of a fish leaping that the look-out condescended to see me. Mistaking my head at first for a strange fish, he was going to spear me ; but when I explained who I was, he threw me a rope.

As soon as I was on board, I hastened to Abdallah, who quickly had the men in the boats and ready to lower away. Then, by a little careful manœuvring, the Shark was veered round, and presented her broadside to the town. I was in a boat, and, fast as we rowed, could see that the Malays would get between us and the castle, though we had such a short distance to row. This would give them the advantage of the hill, but we had that of discipline. They had heard the noise of the boats, and doubtless suspected something ; for, as it grew momentarily lighter, I could

discern that there was a large party just emerging from the town.

We disembarked quickly, hoping to attack our enemies on the hill before the others could be near enough to render them assistance. But Mous-soul would not let his men run, keeping them well in hand, much to my chagrin. My anxiety and impatience kept me at least ten yards ahead ; and, before I had the least intimation of it, a spear grazed my left arm, and an arrow from a sumptan whizzed by my cheek. At this I rushed on the foe with my tulwar, old Moussoul giving a fearful yell, and coming on like a trump to the support at a quick run.

In a minute we were at it in the fiercest style, and I lost my common-sense utterly, fighting in the most absurd way, cutting, hacking, thrusting with my tulwar, without using my brains for a moment. Soon, in the midst of the *mêlée*, we heard the roar of the Shark's guns just at day-break, as if in compliment to the sun, and the broadside was succeeded by a continuous roar.

There must have been five hundred Malays and niggers engaged against us, and the sheer force of numbers was gradually thrusting us down the hill, when Nizam himself arrived from the castle, and made an attack on the enemy's rear with such ferocity that he split their force into two portions, one on the side of the hill facing the sea, the other on the side facing the town and

the river. We met in the centre, Nizam and I, and, joining forces, made a tremendous charge on the enemy, driving them down the hill in confusion. Old Moussoul in the mean time maintained his ground against the others ; and, on our return, we charged them again, and the day was ours. The rout was complete.

By this time it was broad daylight, and we could discern the enemy fleeing into the interior. The huts were all leveled, and there were numerous bodies around them ; but the proas and my pirogue were quite safe, the enemy having been driven from them by the firing. Greatly to my surprise, Nizam dispatched messengers to the town to hoist the white flag. The Shark had ceased firing, and a boat was leaving her, steering for the jetty. We went down toward the town, and in fifteen minutes a Papuan came to know the meaning of the white flag. He had been sent by the brother of Tamula, and when brought before Nizam trembled like a leaf.

Nizam looked at him contemptuously for a moment. Then he said : “ Dog, are your masters satisfied with their war against me ? ”

The sable envoy’s teeth chattered, and he bowed his head in anguish to the ground.

“ You are a *kala sur* [black hog] ; but I blame you not, who obeyed the treacherous Malays, sons of Sheitan, whom I will wipe out. Remain here until evening, and then go back to your friends,

and tell the Papuans that Nizam will give ten pounds of rice and ten pounds of the unclean meat for each Malay's head. Abdallah, see that he does not escape."

The white flag still floated, but no more ambassadors arrived, and indeed both parties knew perfectly well that there could be no forgiveness, and that the war would last to the death. We returned in triumph to the castle, Nizam leaning on my shoulder.

Though Al Reis was a relentless foe, his generosity to friends was a marked peculiarity of his character, notwithstanding the episode I am about to relate.

At the courtyard he ordered his carpet to be spread, and he sat there surrounded by his officers. He ordered Moussoul to bring him all the Arabs one by one, and to each one he gave ten dollars in hard silver ; to the petty officers he gave thirty-five ; and to each principal officer he gave a handful doubled of gold coins. To Abdallah, who joined us in a few minutes, he gave a string of pearls from his own neck ; to Moussoul a thousand ashrafis of gold ; to Abou the same and the pirogue. To me he gave nothing. I was cut on the forehead with a Malay creese ; the blood was flowing from spear-wounds in my arms and legs ; my hand was black with the blood that had trickled from my tulwar, and I bore abundant proofs of not having shirked the fighting.

Abou whispered to him : “ And the Feringhi, Al Reis ? ”

“ For the Feringhi,” said Nizam, taking off his slipper with a scowl, and hitting me a violent blow on the cheek, “ *there is this !* ”

A murmur of astonishment went through the people, and I was so beside myself with anger, and weak from loss of blood, that I fell swooning at his feet.

CHAPTER X.

APOSTASY.

WHEN I awoke from my fainting-fit, my head was pillowed on the lap of Fatima, who was bathing my wounds. The wives of Nizam were present ; and on looking round I found that I was actually in the zenana, probably in Fatima’s room. Fatima was unveiled, but the others were so swathed that I could only see their large dark eyes. I did not know exactly what had passed or was passing ; but soon I remembered, and despite the presence of the veiled females, I flung my arms around Fatima, who returned my embrace with equal ardor.

Nizam made his appearance. “ It is death by our law for a Christian to see an Arab girl unveiled.”

For the life of me I could only respond stupidly : "Is it?"

"You have seen Fatima unveiled. What must be done to you?"

I replied stolidly : "I must die, I suppose." I remembered what he had said, but did not recall it to him, being too proud ; but I looked it.

He said : "Yes ; I promised you life and my daughter, and I will keep my word ; but the law must not be broken."

Even then I was so stupid that I could not see what was coming.

He repeated : "The law must not be broken. If a man who is not a believer look upon an Arab woman, he must die, or" (here he smiled at me) "become a believer and marry her." Having delivered this ultimatum, he smiled again, and, beckoning to the veiled ladies, departed, leaving me alone with Fatima.

I was quite wide awake now, and observed that my fair companion was beaming with uncontrollable joy, and ready at a moment's notice to display her transports. Seeing that I looked bewildered and unhappy, she became seized with sudden timidity, and waited anxiously for what I might say.

"Fatima," I commenced, "I must die, or give up my religion."

She glanced at me from under her beautiful

long eyelashes, but said nothing. Never had she looked to greater advantage.

“Fatima,” I continued, passing my arm round her yielding waist, “it is hard to die so young, especially when one is beloved. Do you remember our first meeting?”

She never spoke, but gradually pressed closer to me, until her head was reclining on my shoulder and her breath fanned my cheek.

I went on : “Do you remember how you told me of your mother, and how you wished to be a Christian, and besought me to teach you the tenets of your mother’s faith?”

She never spoke, but her bosom heaved tumultuously ; she encircled my neck with one arm, and with the other sought for my hand, which she pressed passionately.

I still continued : “Do you remember how you promised to worship as I worshiped, to eat as I ate, to live as I lived, Fatima?”

Surely the wit of all her sex was in her at that moment. Had she entreated me, I would have insisted on being a martyr ; had she prayed me with the tenderest words to obey her father, I am certain that I would have made fine speeches, and shouted to Nizam to take my head. But the girl was actuated by such a pure love for unworthy me, that instinctively she comprehended the danger of any opposition. Her tongue did not speak ; but her eyes, her beauty, her pleading arms, spoke

the sensations of her heart. She pressed her lips to mine suddenly with an ardor that astonished me, and sank back swooning, overcome by the vehemence of her emotions.

Feeling somehow that I was to blame for having thus wrought upon her susceptibilities, I strove to restore her to consciousness, and was rewarded with the most bewitching smile. I caught her, and pressed her in a transport of uncontrollable love to my heart, crying : " Dear one, you said to me that you would worship at my shrine, and partake of my cup, and would be wholly mine, for love's sake. Now hear me say that since the Fates have ordained it, I will worship as you worship, and will partake of your cup, and will be wholly yours."

I cannot depict the rapture that ensued. Far rather let me plead, in extenuation of my apostasy, that I was very young, that I had never been properly imbued with religious feeling, that I was desperately in love, and that Fatima had completely humored me by giving me no chance for heroics, and by fanning to the utmost my tenderness for her.

Nizam entered shortly, whereupon Fatima coquettishly assumed her veil.

" Well, Feringhi, do you accept the conditions, and marry my daughter ?"

" I do, Al Reis ; and let me say that in giving me Fatima you bestow on me a jewel that I

could never deserve were I to live a thousand years."

"She is a pearl, a veritable Taj Mahal!" responded the gratified father. "And she has made a convert to our faith, by which the whole household will inherit Paradise. My son, come with me, for I have much to say and to hear from you."

I accompanied him to the little audience-room; and we sat there for many hours arranging the preliminaries of my new life. It was arranged that I should go on a cruise with Abou, accompanied by a Mohammedan teacher he had brought from Oman, and that instruction in the faith should be then imparted. Next he gave me the history of his adventures with the cargo, which he had sold to great advantage, my share coming to twenty thousand ashrafis of gold. Then he questioned me as to the papers; and I gave him a list of Dutch words which I had compiled from them, but at the same time explained the impossibility of the task, and recommended opening the casket with a cold chisel. This, however, he would not hear of, but said we had a lifetime before us, and chance might favor us.

In my turn, I asked that I might have the writing-desk of the Dutch captain to keep the papers in, to which he cordially assented; and he gave me besides whatever I might choose among his stores, or in the cabins of the Shark, for the

fitting up of the pirogue, which he agreed should be named Fatima. We had the midday meal together, and parted on the most cordial terms, my conscience light as that of a lover who has obtained a father's consent.

I sought Abou and told him the news ; whereupon my good old friend threw himself into my arms and embraced me so joyfully that it took away my breath. It was a purely unselfish delight, for Abou was Nizam's right-hand man, and might have been excused for feeling jealous ; but he, on the contrary, felt the greatest pleasure at the news, and had an attachment for me of which I was unworthy, and which I fear I requited after a poor fashion in the end. I told him Nizam's generous offer about fitting out the pirogue, and he promised to see after it all, and to bring the writing-desk on board as well. Released from these cares, I returned to Nizam's room, and consulted with him as to whether I might see Fatima during the few days that intervened before we set sail. But my future father-in-law explained that such a thing was perfectly impossible, not to be thought of for a moment, and that I would not see Fatima again until the moment of the marriage ceremony. He proposed, seeing disappointment on my face, that we should inaugurate a hunt after the Malays ; but I pointed out to him that, in the wood that stretched beyond the mountains, the arrows of the sumpitans would be more

deadly than our pistols, and that the game was not worth hunting anyhow. So he dropped the idea, and left me to my own resources, which were extremely limited. Having nothing better to do, I whiled away the time by committing to memory, and afterward copying in Arabic writing, one of the poems of the Moallakat which Abdallah had recited to me ; the third, I think it is, about a love adventure of Antar. This, with stepping down a few times to the ruins of the Malay town to see after the Papuans, filled up the longest, slowest days I ever spent.

The Arabs waited until Friday, which is with them supposed to be specially lucky, and is indeed their sabbath, though they make no difference between it and other days. On that auspicious day the Fatima sailed on her first cruise, with myself as the nominal commander, though Abou had real charge, as indeed it was his vessel. The wind was from the northeast, which would have been bad for a proa ; but the Fatima could sail within five points of the wind, and accordingly could get along by making a short tack and then a long one, which brought us satisfactorily out of the channel. Then we crowded all sail straight for the coast of Burmah and the Straits of Malacca.

The Fatima had one great advantage over the proas in her appearance : she looked like a French lugger, but was incomparably lighter, swifter,

and more buoyant ; and the spars were made of light material that would never break, and could be easily handled by two men. A crew of three could take the *Fatima* anywhere. She was flush-decked, and by battening down the hatches of the forecastle and the cabin, not a particle of water could get in ; and we could defy a typhoon in the open ocean. We had a wheel to steer with ; and the arrangements below for cooking and comfort were as good as in some merchant-vessels. Our capacity for stowing away cargo was considerable ; and, in short, the pirogue was really worthy of the affection with which we regarded it.

We ran along under full sail, making extraordinary speed, and gliding along in a ghost-like sort of way. But the wind, which at first had been quite gentle, increased shortly after we lost sight of Celebes, and soon blew a regular gale. Our craft behaved delightfully, climbing up the waves and racing down them without effort, riding the water like a storm-bird. But the Papuans, whom we had brought to man the sweeps in case of a calm, by no means liked the look of things, and evidently thought we were crazy in not taking shelter under the volcanic islands that were far to leeward. But, greatly to their horror, though the wind increased, we kept steadily on, until even the Arabs began to look a little white at matters. At last the man at the wheel left it, refusing to steer unless we changed our course

and scudded before the wind. I took the helm myself, and ordered him and the others to go below and sleep. Abou seconding this, they retired, though evidently in great dudgeon. The wind went down toward evening ; and when they came up again they were somewhat ashamed to find the vessel all right, the sea subsiding, and the sun setting in peaceful splendor.

Abou was steering, and Abdallah, who was with us, came up and complimented him upon the pirogue, which he owned was a perfect marvel. On the third day we sighted a square-rigged vessel, coming evidently from some port in India, and making for a Chinese harbor. The wind was light and variable, and only the lighter sails of the stranger were drawing, the heavy canvas of the topsails and courses hanging idly against the masts. But the Fatima's sails, being of fine material, except the foresail, which was of the strongest stuff we could find, drew splendidly, and we glided onward rapidly, nearing the ship in an oblique direction, as if we were steering for the Irrawady.

I was lying on my carpet on the quarter-deck, and Abou issued directions, Abdallah acting as his second in command. We soon were within speaking distance, and the stranger hailed us : "What ship is that?"

Abdallah nodded to me, and I shouted back : "The Fatima, of Sarawak, bound to Bombay."

“What’s your cargo?”

“Palm-oil and seed-pearl.”

“Will you take letters to Bombay?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Then come on board.”

Both steersmen having the same intention, the *Fatima* glided alongside, and was secured at once to the ship. I stepped on board, for the adventure promised to be curious, and was welcomed by the captain, who told me his ship was the *Moulmein*, of Bombay, bound to Canton with opium. He asked me to step into his cabin, and produced sherry and biscuits; but I excused myself on the ground of its being Ramadan, which indeed it was. If I had tasted anything, of course I must have spared them, which would have been false to my Arab friends, and ruin to all my selfish hopes.

The captain seemed surprised at my English, but I told him that I was born at Delhi, and had served in the Irregular Horse. While we were speaking, and he was complimenting my excellent English, there arose a tremendous yell and the sound of fierce fighting. He excused himself to me, and was about to rush out, when I tripped him up and told him he was a prisoner. He struggled fiercely; but I was too strong for him, and during the scuffle that ensued he fell heavily on the cabin floor and became insensible.

Taking the precaution of binding him securely

hand and foot, I emerged from the cabin with the captain's revolver, discharging the barrels as I came on, and flinging the pistol itself at the head of the chief mate, a great, raw-boned Scotchman. Before he could recover himself, I drew my canjeer with my left hand, gave an Arab yell, and charged the line of sailors who had formed near the forecastle. Being seconded by the pirates, I drove them into the forecastle, and then and there announced to them that if they would surrender, we would content ourselves with the cargo ; but, if they did not come out and submit to be tied, we would burn the ship.

Upon this they came out submissively and gave up their weapons, and being asked if they would help in unloading, they said they would ; so we did not tie them. The opium was in large whitish balls about the size of a Dutch cheese. It was not packed in boxes, but loose ; so that the more hands we had the better. In consideration of this assistance, we did not plunder the forecastle, but ransacked thoroughly the cabins. I secured a chronometer, thermometer, barometer, quadrant, and set of charts, which I had wanted badly. There was a little money, but so little that I thought it belonged to the captain, and left it where I found it. But we took cooking utensils, table-cloths, a sofa, a table, and the square, big hammock of the captain ; and then, finding that there was not much more to take, we bade

them farewell, having loaded with as much opium as we could conveniently stow, though more than half remained in the vessel's hold.

Abou, Abdallah, and I then held a council of war as to what should be done. We were then steering for the Straits of Malacca, and going none the worse, it seemed, for our heavy cargo.

Abdallah remarked : "If we get back to Jezi-reh with opium, we shall not get thanks from Nizam."

"Well, but," I replied, "this is Abou's boat, and Nizam only gets a share as chief. And Nizam can take it to Bushire, or Mohammerah, or even Bombay, if it comes to that, in the Shark, and dispose of it there."

Abou said : "Can't we sell it ourselves?"

"Of course we can," cried Abdallah. "Let us go to Shin' (China).

The idea was not a bad one, and our course was altered accordingly. The vessel we had plundered soon spied us coming back, and evidently imagined we were going to make another attack, perhaps for the sake of completing the plunder. We could see them busily wetting their sails, and doing their utmost to get away ; but we passed them peaceably, the pirogue going wonderfully fast in light winds.

Soon the wind increased a little, not enough for a square-rigged vessel, but just enough to

allow the Fatima to show her best pace ; and we made a quick passage without adventure to the mouth of Canton Harbor, or, as it is called, the Boca Tigris. Numerous pilot-boats came out and wanted to take us up, but we steadily refused, without giving any reason for our conduct. The fourth pilot was not so readily repulsed. He put his finger to the side of his nose : "Me savee youee pigeon."

"What do you say ?"

"Me savee whatee got shippee ; no papers gottee, opium gottee ; all same me pigeon."

I nodded assent.

He chuckled. "Wait piecee. I go bring gentleman fixee you pigeon." Saying this he darted into his boat and made for shore.

Abdallah and Abou were very curious as to what had passed, and I explained, and added what I had heard at mess, that opium was not a legal commodity in China, and that it had to be smuggled in.

Before nightfall we were hailed by a long, rakish junk, rowed by a great many oars, that came down the stream with marvelous speed. From this craft we were boarded by an American, who offered us so many taels for all the opium we had on board, assuring us that he would run it through on his own responsibility and with his own craft. He certainly looked at our vessel with surprise, but he asked no questions.

I consulted with my friends, who said that we had better not take Chinese silver, if we could get American or German ; so I asked him if he would mind paying in dollars. “Not the least,” he said ; in fact, he preferred it.

So we accompanied his junk to a small island behind Macao, the Portuguese settlement, where the transfer was made in four trips, and departed with a very handsome sum in bright silver. Inflated with this lucky venture, Abdallah wanted to continue the cruise ; but I reminded him that there was somebody waiting for me in Jezireh who would not thank them for prolonging my absence.

This argument was conclusive, and we returned to Jezireh, my instruction in the Mohammedan faith having, I fear, been sadly neglected !

CHAPTER XI.

MATRIMONY.

I MUST say that the Arabs are very easy and agreeable in their ideas of marriage. I dreaded some absurd and fantastic rites ; and I found the whole ceremony consisted in exchanging rings and being blessed by the “teacher !” I was not compelled to be present at the grand festival made by

Nizam in honor of the happy event ; but I was very glad to go, not only because my friends would feel hurt, but also because Mohammedan etiquette forbids the bride and bridegroom to meet until the evening.

I went round among the pirates, making myself as popular as I could, until the termination of the long day, when I paced up the hill with the dignity of an Arab, and went as slowly as I could to the quarters which had been prepared for me in my absence, and which composed my zenana. I need not say how dearly I was welcomed by the fond heart that awaited me, nor describe the happiness I found in the unrestrained society of Fatima. Suffice it to say that never was man so blessed in a beautiful and loving spouse.

But even though the days passed in a dream of happiness, there was one element of bitterness in my cup. I had renounced my religion, and day by day the thought gave me greater affliction. My conscience, drugged by selfish love, awoke, and tormented me ceaselessly ; and Fatima watched my moods with a devotion which I neither deserved nor could comprehend. One day, when I entered her apartment, I sank into a fit of musing reverie. My darling nestled silently by my side, nor offered to interrupt my thoughts. I mechanically caressed her flowing hair ; and her little white hand, with the nails tipped with pink henna, was raised to my forehead.

“Carlos, let me smooth out these wrinkles.”

I sighed. “Ah, love, suppose they are in my heart, and these on my forehead only the reflections?”

“Carlos, why should they be in your heart, or in mine rather? For your heart is mine; is it not, my lord?”

“You know it is, Fatima.”

“I am happy with you, Carlos; are you not happy with poor Fatima?”

“Indeed, indeed, I am most happy, nor do I deserve such love as yours. But, Fatima, there is something more than the happiness you can give. I want the peace of my own conscience; I want that which I alone can give to myself—the consciousness of doing my duty, of doing what is right. O Fatima, my wife, my angel, rescue me—save me from this anguish, or I am lost without redemption!”

“Be calm, my lord, be calm, for there is nothing that you can ask of Fatima that Fatima will not give. Are you sorry that you have become an Arab?”

“Yes, indeed I am. Stay, Fatima: do not weep. I am not sorry that I am your husband; but oh, darling wife, this is not life, this is not liberty. This preying upon the weak and the defenseless, this hunting of Malay wolves with Papuan dogs, this heaping up of treasures never to be used—are these occupations worthy of me?”

“What would my husband do?”

“Let us flee together, Fatima; let us go to my own land.”

“And my father——”

“I too have a father, who shall be yours—who will cherish you as I do, who will love you as I do, and who will pour blessings daily on your head for restoring to him his son—his only child.”

Fatima, with eyes brimming with salt tears, pressed her red lips to mine, and smiled. “Am I not yours, my husband? I am the barque, you the wind. Go wherever you list, and I will follow you. I am part of you, as much as my arm is part of me. If my husband goes to Tophet, I will accompany him; for his love and his society are worth soul, body, everything to me.”

Here the impassioned girl lavished upon me a thousand caresses, and in broken accents and with faltering breath poured such a tale of love into my delighted ears as completely ravished my senses. Taught from her earliest years that her sole end and aim in life was to be loved and love, the whole force of Fatima’s character was centred on her love for her husband, and she fairly worshipped him.

Feeling that I could completely rely on my wife’s assistance and coöperation, I unfolded to her my purpose, which was either to seize a proa or the pirogue, and make my way to Australia, where

I could get tidings of my father. To this she assented cheerfully, although she would be cast forever into another world, and have to painfully commence a new existence. But of this she recked little. Her happiness was to see me happy, and to be with me ; and she was resolved upon the sacrifice.

Accordingly, I visited the pirogue during the next day, giving out that Abou and I would go shortly on a cruise. All my possessions were on board, and the writing-desk of the Dutch captain, which contained the bank-notes and the papers which I had faithfully studied without any result. My Fatima's maid, Yarifa, was a great strong woman, as black as a coal, and with the muscles of a prize-fighter. Her husband, Bikur my slave, was a Seedi, as I have elsewhere said, and very strong ; and he had at my directions brought on board and stowed away as much provision as we could secure. It seemed to me that with his assistance and that of my wife and her powerful maid I could navigate the pirogue and arrive in safety at Hobart Town or Port Phillip.

At length came the eventful evening. Nizam had been unusually kind, and had made my wife a present of a necklace of large pearls, which she received with mingled joy and sorrow. Our plan was that I should make ready the pirogue for starting whenever the women could be got on board ; and, accordingly, I made Bikur scull me

on board and return quietly for them. There was no one in the vessel, and with a beating heart I waited the eventful hour. There were no clocks to chime, and the chronometer I had taken from the Moulmein was the only timepiece for a thousand miles ; but the position of the stars indicates the hour with sufficient exactitude.

After weary watching, Bikur slowly paddled a sampan up to the pirogue, with my wife and her maid, Yarifa. They had eluded the watchfulness of the sentinels and stolen past. It was then about eight o'clock, and we could count upon eight hours' start ; so, imploring the blessing of Heaven upon my enterprise, I slipped our moorings, and, motioning Bikur to assist me to make fast the sampan, we hoisted first one lug, then the other, and then the jibs and foresail. We made very little noise, and attracted no attention on board the Shark, whose two big lanterns were burning ; but I knew that the watch would be fast asleep.

We glided on past the huge hulk, our sails flapping as they were momentarily winded by the mass. I held my breath, expecting every moment to hear a challenge ; but none came, and the pirogue, rapidly increasing in speed, soon passed into shadow.

I endeavored to persuade Fatima to go below, but she crouched beside me as I steered, and shook her head. Bikur and Yarifa were more

amenable to authority, and went below at once. Soon my ears convinced me that they were sleeping the sleep of the just. We entered the channel, and here the peculiar construction of the pirogue stood us in good stead. There could be but little wind in that landlocked place, but the little there was brought us on gallantly at a pace that the big Shark could not have rivaled. Still I confess I was not free from anxiety until I got out of the channel and was steering boldly to the south.

Then I lashed the wheel, the wind being on the starboard quarter, sent my wife down for Bikur, who came up rubbing his eyes, and told him to stand by the wheel, and, if the wind rose or he saw a ship, to call me.

With this order I went below to the cabin and gave Fatima her first lesson how to sleep in a square hammock. In sober truth, she showed much more timidity over this tremendous effort than she had done in risking her life by escaping from her father.

It had been nearly dawn when I retired. When I rose it was full noon, and there was not a speck in sight. Bikur seemed quite proud of his steering, which he believed was done by merely holding the spokes. Yarifa got breakfast pretty tolerably, considering the novelty of her situation, and we enjoyed it heartily.

After the meal, I insisted on giving them both

a good drilling in handling the sails, slacking sheets, etc., and at last made them both comprehend the names. Fatima, too, would be taught, so that she might take command while I steered ; but I showed her how to steer in preference, as that required skill rather than strength.

Our compass was rather a splendid affair, one of Nizam's gifts ; and Fatima, who was very shrewd, learned to box it with remarkable quickness. She was not long in acquiring the science of steering, which, in those calm latitudes, where ships often sail for weeks and weeks at a time without shifting a sail, was not hard or dangerous.

We soon arranged our labors. Yarifa was to cook and to assist in lowering or raising the sails. Bikur had to take turn about in steering with me.

"What am *I* to do ?" cried Fatima.

"Well," said I, "you can assist in steering occasionally, when I am tired."

"No," said she ; "I'll sit beside you, and work steadily at opening the casket."

"The casket ?"

"Ah !" cried Fatima, "miserable woman that I am ! I kept a secret from my lord. What will my lord give to know it ?" With an arch look, the dear creature vanished below, and soon reappeared, bringing the identical casket that we had found in the Dutchman's safe, and the list of words I had given Nizam. "See here," said she ; "I

have done all these, and there remain to be tried one, two, three—oh, ever so many.”

“Don’t do it,” I replied. “It will be pure waste of time. The secret cannot be found. But we can break it open at the back with a chisel and hammer, as I told your father often. How did you come by it?”

“It was always in my charge, Carlos, from the first, because I knew Feringhi letters. I learned them from mother’s nurse, who died four years after mother.”

“And you never said a word ; little hypocrite !”

“No, my lord, for it was my father’s secret, not Fatima’s.”

“But you took it from him.”

“It was to be Fatima’s dowry.”

Now that the casket was mine, I must confess I thought more about opening it than I had before. But I had learned by this time that my wife’s wits were keener than mine, and I showed her how foolish it was to look for the secret word in the ship’s papers. She saw this too, and made me recite all the particulars of the pillaging, cautioning me not to omit the smallest details.

This I did, and she listened attentively. Then she said : “This requires consideration, and I will think about it. Do not let us talk of it, my husband ; but tell me how I shall live and what I shall wear in the new world.”

I willingly consented and recited what I knew

of European life to the best of my ability, replying to her eager questioning rather poorly, I am afraid. Her big black eyes were fixed eagerly upon me ; and she seemed to read my countenance, and to know my answers before I had given them.

By this time she spoke English fairly, and I labored diligently to perfect her, as I was excessively proud of her, and longed in my foolish adoration to see her a queen of English society.

Every day went by like its predecessor, hardly a sail being changed, and the pirogue sped silently over the waters like an enchanted bird. The wind, being on the quarter, served either way ; so, after sailing seven days due south, I shifted her course about five points to the westward ; and I did this because I was not sure of the allegiance of my crew. If I had been, I would have sailed straight as an arrow for Hobart Town ; but in the way things were, I was afraid to face a storm. So I resolved to make the northwest coast of Australia, and to follow the shore-line, sheltering behind bluffs from bad weather.

Day by day the sun rose and set, and we saw no sail. How could we ? We were in a part of the ocean unfrequented by commerce, quite out of the great highways ; and to see a ship would have been to see an unfortunate driven there by a storm, or a pirate cruising among the islands, and striking down for New Zealand. Occasionally there are

roving merchantmen who sail independently in these waters, but such cases are few and far between.

Bikur had too great a knowledge of the distance in rank between himself and the chief's son-in-law ever to ask where we were going, or when we should return. But Yarifa took the privilege of a cook to demand one fine morning, after we had left Jezireh some seventeen days, what we were doing.

Fatima told her, with an air of great secrecy, that her husband was possessed of magical knowledge, and that her father owned a magic casket which no one could open. He himself could never open it ; but by spells and charms her husband had found that there was a powerful enchanter who dwelt on a great island to the southward, and that he would reveal the charm if seized by four people, two men and two women, two white and two black. This precious farrago of nonsense Fatima gravely confided to the staring Yarifa, who listened open-mouthed.

Fatima earnestly besought her to keep this a secret from Bikur, as, though he was a brave man, he might be afraid of encountering a wizard. Yarifa vowed, by the Prophet and his beard, that she would religiously keep the secret. She begged for a sight of the casket, which was shown to her. Being highly polished, she took it for silver ; but, when she found that the point of a dag-

ger would not penetrate it, her jaw dropped ; and when she saw the mysterious lock with its unknown mysterious marks, her awe was indescribable.

Being seen soon after in close conference with Bikur, we supposed that she told him everything. And his manner for the next few days was full of a certain importance, mingled with a ludicrous sense of injury, which I pretended not to notice. He took occasion also to convince me that he was perfectly brave, and not afraid of Sheitan or any amount of afrits (evil genii).

On the twenty-first day of our wandering, land appeared on the left. We approached it about midnight, and examined it curiously. It was a range of barren sand-hills of no great height, as desolate a place as I ever beheld. The water broke with considerable violence on the beach, and we could not have landed had we desired it ever so much. The sight of land so filled our hearts with gladness that Fatima and I returned thanks to Almighty God for his continued mercies.

Next day the weather changed. Thick clouds gathered rapidly overhead, and the wind swung around to the southeast. This was the worst quarter it could have blown from, and, as it increased hourly in violence, I ran in toward shore. Before we could well make out what kind of a place it was, the rain came down in sheets, and I

was forced to batten down the hatches. We lowered the lug-sails, hauled down the jibs, and tried her weatherly qualities under the foresail. The pirogue behaved capitally, and struggled against the head-wind like a beauty, riding easily over the biggest waves. Bikur, I am sorry to say, did not maintain his character for courage, and at every wave that combed over our little bark shouted upon Allah in a most fervent manner.

Fatima, who had ever a most undaunted spirit, did not bother me by coming on deck or lamenting, but brewed the most delicious coffee and sent it up every hour. As we could hardly see where we were, so pitchy were the skies and so fierce the rain, I was compelled to keep the pirogue under way by a series of short tacks.

Bikur, to whom I intrusted the sheet of the fore-sail, behaved most wretchedly, and I was obliged to threaten to pitch him overboard if he didn't show more courage. The fore-sheet escaped on one occasion from his trembling hands, and I was obliged to summon Fatima to take the wheel, while I went to the blunderer's assistance.

It kept on in this fashion for about twelve hours, the pirogue rising on every wave and shaking herself like a seabird. There was no fear of her so long as we could keep her head to the waves. About ten o'clock next morning the weather slightly moderated; and as we were not

far from the coast, and there was a whitish appearance about one part which made me think it was the mouth of a river, we hauled up our lug-sails, and, turning the pirogue's head directly for it, were soon riding in smooth water. Pitching out a little grapnel, I then tumbled down-stairs, and was soon fast asleep in my hammock.

I awoke about three in the afternoon. Fatima had slept too, and I believe there had not been an open eye among the crew. We longed for fresh food, our provisions having consisted of nothing but rice, curry, and salt meat ; so, with a view to testing the qualities of the fish in our new waters, we prepared our fishing-lines, and soon had a plentiful mess of fine fish, something like carp, only with horny appendages to their lips like an immature beak. Under the skillful cuisine of Yarifa, they proved excellent eating, and we packed some in a water-barrel for after-use.

The wind was still boisterous outside, but in our snug haven we rather enjoyed it than otherwise. The rain came on again toward nightfall, and lasted for many hours, accompanied by tremendous peals of thunder, and lightning terribly vivid and incessant.

When the wind went down we judged it on the whole advisable to go higher up and try to secure some fresh meat. The pirogue was left in charge of the women, and Bikur accompanied me in the sampan to the shore, which was wooded

heavily, the trees coming right down to the water's edge. Securing the sampan to a fallen tree, we started on our hunting adventure. We found the forest did not extend far inland, for we soon came to a plain undulating with hills and valleys, and adorned with broad clumps of trees. There were no signs of man, and the animals that frisked past us did not seem afraid. They were mostly a large kind of rabbit, but, the gun I had brought being loaded with ball, I did not care to fire at so small an object. There were also strange little creatures, just like miniature kangaroos, and when they hopped on their hind-legs their motions were grotesque in the extreme; their eyes and heads were just like the English black rat, and their movements were so peculiar that I heartily wished I had brought Fatima to enjoy the sight.

We had just climbed a low hill, when Bikur gripped my arm. "Look there!" he cried. "Surely this is the land of afrits."

Bikur's countenance was so pitiful, and betrayed such a longing to retire promptly upon the sampan, that I could not help rallying him upon his fears. I turned to see what had frightened him, and saw something curious indeed, but not frightful. There was a herd of kangaroos—a big fellow, two females, and three little ones. The male was higher than a man, and was a colossal likeness of the rat whose antics had amused us.

Entering into Bikur's thoughts, I could understand his fright. Fatima's story of the enchant-er had taken full possession of his superstitious soul, and he evidently believed that the kangaroo was an afrit which had suddenly increased in size, like the cat in the "Arabian Nights."

I thought it best to keep this delusion in his mind, so baring my head, which, in the East, is considered an act of desperation, and screwing up a look of the most intense emotion, I muttered some lines of doggerel improvised for the occasion, with the intonation of a sorcerer. Then, drawing a circle on the ground, I suddenly dropped on one knee, and, aiming carefully, fired, sending my ball clean through the heart of the big fellow. Bikur—who, during these proceedings, had fallen on the ground, and was invoking Allah with commendable energy—jumped to his feet, and ran up to the fallen demon. Drawing my canjear, I soon skinned and quartered our prize, and, selecting the choicest morsels, packed them on Bikur's back. With this game we returned in triumph to the sampan, boarded the pirogue, and reported progress to the delighted women.

My slave Bikur, who had up to this point served me tolerably well, began now to show symptoms of insubordination. To his unsophisticated mind, the slight adventure on the island, together with my cabalistic movements, had

wrought a fear which the poor fellow strove but ill to suppress. He implored me to return to Jezireh, owning that he had not courage to go through with any further adventures. But I told him that retreat was impossible, and that a courageous heart was the only thing that could serve him. If he faltered, he would peril the safety of all. If he persevered bravely, then I would reward him richly.

The wind moderating during the night, and shifting to the northwest, I took advantage of the tide, and set sail once more. We were soon clear of the river, and steering down to the sweet south.

CHAPTER XII.

WANDERING.

My chief concern was with Bikur. His state of mind was evidently deplorable. Between his fear of me and his dread of the adventure, he was fast approaching a condition of absolute desperation. I consulted Fatima ; and that admirable woman proposed that by taking hold of his superstition we could turn it to our advantage, as now it was to our weakness. She advised that I should go through some mumbo-jumbo performance, and give to Yarifa and Bikur a pebble or trifle of

some kind as a fetich, which would protect them from all assaults of magic might, unless made by a wizard with more powerful spells than I possessed. Accordingly we set ourselves to work to devise some plan by which I might overawe Bikur into placid obedience by working upon his imagination, and then raise him to the height of bliss by the pretended talisman. I rummaged over the desk of the Dutch captain for papers that might give me a hint, and I perceived for the first time that there was a set of drawers secreted under the compartment for paper. I ferreted about the compartment with my fingers, and at length convinced myself that the spring was on the outside, which proved to be the case. Touching one of the ornaments, the head of a long shallow drawer became manifest ; and this I drew out with much eagerness. It contained nothing at the first glance ; but a more careful survey showed a little piece of paper rolled up and tucked under the velvet which had been loosened for the purpose. I unrolled it, and saw, in Greek characters, *αναγκη*. Fatima ejaculated "The word, the word !" and rushed for the casket ; but as she could not read Greek she had to let her lord accomplish the task. I carefully arranged on the casket the letters *anagke*. But to my disappointment the lid remained fast. Then I tried it according to the pronunciation, *anangke* ; nothing budged. Sure that it was the word, I tried it again as I thought it would be

pronounced by the Dutch, *aenankie*, and the lid of the casket opened instantly.

It disclosed a necklace of rubies so magnificent that I thought at first I must be dreaming, as large rubies are quite rare. Yet here were twenty-three stones, each of them of quite unusual size, and in the centre was an opal of the most dazzling lustre, as large as a good-sized walnut. I threw it with irrepressible enthusiasm around the snowy neck of my darling wife, who received it with becoming modesty. We both resolved to look upon it as a favorable omen. Taking the casket to the cabin and hiding it away with its precious contents, Fatima returned with a lightsome countenance. "Husband," said she, "I see the way to pacify Bikur and Yarifa, and secure them in perfect obedience. You told me that, from what you had seen in an almanac on board the Dutch vessel, there will shortly be an eclipse of the moon. Let us land if possible, and do you draw a circle on the ground and utter conjurations. Then, as the shadow steals over the moon, produce the casket, and place it in the circle, speaking in Arabic, and ordering the enchanter, who by his spells is darkening the bright circle of the moon, to command me to give the magic word."

I thought this an excellent device. So far as my memory served me, the eclipse ought to take place some time about midnight of the following day, so I took the first opportunity of calling Bikur

on one side. Giving the wheel to my wife, I went forward with him, under pretense of shifting the foresheet, and said : "Bikur, the decisive moment will soon arrive ; and I feel that I cannot blame you for being afraid, because you have no talisman to protect you from afrits."

"Ah, sahib, that is so. If I had a talisman like my lord's, I would not care for Sheitan, or for an army of ghouls and afrits. Bikur is a brave man ; but what could he do against spirits ?"

"That is true, Bikur ; and I am now going to give you a talisman more potent than the seal of Solomon. You see this golden ashrafi. I give this to you freely, and know from this moment that nothing above ground, under ground, in the air, or in the water, can harm you."

Bikur's gratitude was unbounded ; and he immediately passed a string through the sacred coin, and hung it round his neck. "Now, Bikur, you are safe, but the moment approaches. To-morrow night most likely you will see an extraordinary phenomenon ; but you have a potent talisman, and you must not fail me on that occasion, or I cannot guarantee your life."

"What must I do ?" said Bikur, in a not very courageous tone.

"You must stand with a drawn sword on my right hand, and Yarifa must stand behind us, holding up this charm," showing him a quadrant. If you run away, all is lost."

Bikur went away with a very dismal countenance to share his troubles with Yarifa ; but on the whole his aspect was more cheerful, and he evidently put the strongest confidence in the talismanic piece of gold.

As day broke on the following morning, we entered a little bay, so beautiful it seemed like a picture from a fairy tale. The water was perfectly clear, and the sandy bottom, strewn with shells and coral, was so distinct that I expected the pirogue would ground every moment. But there was no danger, for, near as it seemed, it was fully twenty feet down. Fish of the most brilliant colors were darting about, and at the head of the little bay was a bank of soft green turf. Beyond that was another much higher bank, on the top of which tall trees were growing. Here we landed ; and climbing the second bank with some difficulty, as it was pretty steep, Bikur and I found ourselves at the entrance of a thick forest. We threw ourselves down under some trees that had a fruit so much resembling the guava that I plucked some and commenced eating without scruple. If they were guavas, they were twice the size of any I ever saw in India. As I sat enjoying the luscious fruit and reveling in the strangeness of the situation, I could not but feel touched by the thought of what my darling Fatima was undergoing for my sake. Not by a look nor by a gesture, far less a word, did she ever complain of any hard-

ships, or give me cause to remember how much she had sacrificed for me.

I rose up, flushed with the determination that, come what might, I would never cease to be to Fatima as fond as I was then—that I would never cease to be the lover as well as the husband. The underbrush was not enough to impede our progress, and we tramped through for about a quarter of a mile, which was as far as I dared go for fear of losing myself. On our way back, Bikur spied an opening in the wood ; and, making for it, we found one of those natural glades which so puzzle philosophers. When I come to think of it, it is strange that there should be a spot where trees will not grow, although the seeds of hundreds of kinds must be blown there. Such places serve as breathing-holes to the forests, I should think.

When the hour approached for the incantation scene, we all paddled ashore in the sampan. I handed the quadrant to Yarifa, who received it with a shudder, and Bikur snatched up his sword with an air of desperation. Giving the casket to Fatima to carry, with the word formed *all but one letter*, and having my gun on my shoulder, we started for the glade. On arriving there I measured off a circle, and leveled the long grass so that the casket when placed in the centre could be plainly seen. As nearly as I could judge, the time of the eclipse was at hand ; so, taking my

place in the circle, I ordered them to get in their places, and we remained motionless till a black shadow began to eat into the bright disk of the moon. I chanted some doggerel verse, and the black shadow grew larger and larger, until the whole was obscured. It was now nearly pitch-dark, and I called in English, "The word, the word, the word!" Whereupon, while Fatima solemnly emphasized the word *aen-an-kie*, I stooped, and, picking up the casket, touched the remaining letter, which threw open the lid of the mysterious case. The effect was what I anticipated; Bikur and Yarifa both sank to the ground in a half-swoon; and it was not until the moon had resumed her brightness that I could restore them to reason.

"O Allah, Allah!" cried poor Bikur; "is it over?"

"Yes; thanks be to Allah," I replied. "It is over, and the casket is open."

They looked, and saw the opened lid, and burst into a rhapsody of delight.

"I was not afraid; was I, my lord?" said Yarifa.

"No; that you were not," said I heartily. "And I am sure that Nizam will reward you both well; and so will I."

"Shall we go back now to Jezireh?"

"Perhaps, my friends."

Whereupon the poor deceived creatures kissed

my hands rapturously, and were transported with pleasure. We returned in the best humor to the pirogue, and, hoisting sail, steered straight for Jezireh. But, as soon as Bikur was fast asleep, my wife came to my assistance, and we veered round and stood once more for the south. At length I heard Bikur pointing out to Yarifa, with the air of one who has made a great discovery : "See, black woman ; now we return to Jezireh, the land is on this side ; but, when we were going to the magician's land, it was on that side."

"That's so," said Yarifa. "You're a clever man, Bikur."

"I am indeed ; and we may be proud that we were selected for this great enterprise, for no one could have done it but us."

Still southward and still southward we crept, the wind seemingly chained to our sails. I had heard of this extraordinary quiet weather among these islands and around Polynesia, and yet it seemed incredible. But at length the sails flapped idly to the masts, and we were becalmed.

"Ugh, ugh !" cried Bikur ; "not far from Jezireh now ; I know it by the calms."

But there is a southern latitude of calms as well as a northern, and this I explained to Fatima ; we were approaching the termination of our voyage, though no wind, not even a sigh of wind, disturbed the dreadful monotony of the sea. The sun rose and sank every day on a wave-

less ocean, and we drifted with the current steadily southward. I pointed out to Bikur how we were drifting, and he looked melancholy for a moment, but soon consoled himself with the idea that he was on his way home.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOME.

ACCORDING to my imperfect knowledge of the science of navigation, and by calculating the turns and twists we had made, and allowing for the currents, I concluded that the pirogue could not be very far from the English settlements in West Australia. The shore trends inward considerably to the south, and, as I had kept well out to sea, we were quite a hundred miles to the westward, and had to make much more distance than I supposed, so that, instead of making the land at noon, it was near midnight before I caught the first glimpse of it in the moonlight. It was right ahead. I ran down for the charts, lit a lamp, and began to study our whereabouts, while Fatima, without a word, went up to the wheel.

After puzzling my brains for some time, I at length realized that we were considerably south of Perth, where I intended to arrive; and that the bold headland on the starboard bow must be

Point Naturaliste. As this was evidently so beyond a doubt, by the peculiar configuration of the coast, which here makes a right angle, it was equally plain that we must stand again to the south, make a bold turn eastward, and then run in to Augusta. There was not much time to lose, as at midnight Bikur would come to take the wheel ; so I went on deck and stood clear out to sea again ; and, by the half hour that elapsed before the negro came up, the land in rear of us was the merest speck, almost imperceptible to negro eyes, more especially as Bikur looked for it steadily in the wrong direction.

When I relieved him in the morning, we tacked dead to eastward, and ran so for an entire day, sighting various coasters, which surprised Bikur much. We were too far off to distinguish the crews, so that he remained ignorant of their being white men's vessels. But he pondered something greatly all day long, and Fatima and I agreed to watch our sable friends narrowly. After running considerably to eastward, I commenced a series of tacks in the supposed direction of Augusta, and, as it is a city set upon a hill, had little difficulty in making it. Then Fatima got Yarifa to come and see the land, after which we closed the hatch, and ordered both the negroes to remain on deck. The numerous schooners and sloops, and occasional small steamers, which were either coming in or going out of the port, convinced them that we had

arrived at some great city ; but they saw clearly that we had deceived them, and had sailed to the white man's country. My feelings of rapture would be hard to describe, and I know that I hailed every vessel that came near, from the delight I had in hearing the hearty English words from my own countrymen. There are French settlements north of Augusta, and German villages east of it ; but the immediate vicinity is populated, as is the city itself, exclusively by English people from the southern counties ; so to hear them speak was just like being at home. Tears rolled down my cheeks, and Fatima softly pressed my hand, as if to tell me that she sympathized with me, and was as happy as I.

The wind chopped round to the westward, and favored the pirogue, which moved like a thing of life through the placid waters of the broad harbor, sparkling with the sails of hundreds of small craft. Soon we came abreast of the city, and anchored within five hundred feet of the principal block. Then I called Yarifa and Bikur, whose curiosity had greatly overcome their feelings of surprise, and told them both that they were free either to go with us or to stay in the city where we had arrived, or to go elsewhere, as suited themselves ; but they were no longer slaves, for the country in which we had arrived was one where there were no slaves, but all men were free. They both elected to follow us, and made many protestations

of affection and fidelity, which time has proved to be sincere.

Having arranged that Fatima and Yarifa should stay on board, Bikur and I got into the sampan and paddled to the shore. Our Arab dresses were so conspicuous that I felt a little alarmed about the attention I might receive from the street boys ; but on landing I was agreeably disappointed. We indeed were followed ; but the juveniles thought we were members of some outlandish inland tribe, and refrained from any unpleasant demonstration of regard. Meeting a mounted policeman, who had all the manner and bearing of an old cavalry-man, I asked him where I might find some official, the captain of police, the sheriff or governor, or something of that sort. He gave me the address of the captain of police, whose name was the same as my own, and I hastened there at once. I found quite a genial soldierly man, who was a distant relative of my father's, and had known Uncle Joe perfectly well. I explained to him my position, and recited enough of my adventures to excite his warm sympathy. He immediately offered us rooms in his own house, and insisted on my taking some of his clothes, which I was glad to do. The metamorphosis was soon completed ; and I borrowed his carriage, driving down to the jetty with the captain's servant, and engaging a stout six-oared boat, which soon took me to the pirogue. Taking with us

Fatima and Yarifa, together with the most valuable of our treasures, we hastened back, and were soon in my cousin's hospitable home.

Mrs. Wade took charge in the kindest manner of Fatima, and soon fitted her out with the dresses and toilet articles of European fair. The transformation was complete. Never had Fatima seemed more beautiful ; and I viewed with secret complacency the ease with which she adapted herself to European customs, and the innate grace and good-breeding which excused her blunders. But when on the next day I was obliged to inform Mrs. Wade that we had so far been united only by the Arab teacher, she immediately proposed that Fatima should be baptized, and insisted in the most obliging manner upon serving as her godmother. This brought about a confession from me that I stood in need of the same good offices, having become renegade ; and it was mutually agreed that we should both be baptized, and then married again according to the Episcopal Church of England. The report of our adventures soon got wind, and I cautioned Fatima to say nothing about the casket or our other treasures, as it might make the captain's house a special object of regard to the ticket-of-leave men who find their way to this settlement from the penal ones. Our blacks, knowing no English, could not betray us, and their stories would naturally be so marvelous that nobody would credit

them even if they could have spoken like natives. But even without a knowledge of our jewels, or of the crisp contents of the Dutchman's desk, we were exceedingly interesting to the town's-people of Augusta; and the governor called upon us, and insisted upon being godfather for my Fatima, his wife and Mrs. Wade being her godmothers. This is according to the ideas prevalent in the colonies, where a boy has a godmother and two godfathers, and a girl the converse.

The appointed day came at length, and we were admitted into the bosom of the Church in the presence of all the leading families of Augusta. We were thus reunited in the afternoon of the same day; and I folded to my arms the blushing Mrs. Wade, Isabella now, instead of Fatima. There was a grand feast in the evening at the governor's house, and my wife in white satin was the admired of every one. But the rubies which she wore on that occasion were so far beyond anything that had ever been seen in Australia, that I am afraid some people of questionable taste paid more attention to them than to the wearer, who, in the wedding-dress of a European, must have been an object of envy to many a fair lady present.

We remained for some weeks at the governor's house, and then at his suggestion sailed in our own pirogue, which—in addition to the faithful couple who had been companions of our wander-

ings, and whom we decided upon taking with us to England—was now manned by a stout crew of good seamen. Our friends in Augusta were so obliging as to express great regret at our leaving; but the natural impatience of a son to see his father was sufficient excuse, and we departed for Port Phillip laden with a thousand good wishes, and delicacies of every description. We reached the Port without obstacle or adventure, and were soon whirled with all our belongings to Melbourne. I had preserved a faint sort of a hope that I might find my father there; but, on consulting with the lawyer who had managed his affairs, I learned, to my sorrow, that he had sailed for England, to take measures for finding me through Government authority; and taking with him poor Uncle Joe's fortune to the enormous amount of six hundred thousand pounds. I then inquired for Captain Orde, and was delighted to hear that the *Shooting Star* happened then to be in the harbor, and the honest Yankee captain at the Auckland Hotel.

Thither I repaired in all haste, and found the good fellow, who at first did not recognize me; but who, when I made myself known, fell upon me with the gripe of a bear, and, hugging me in his arms, fairly wept aloud. I was greatly moved by this display of affection in one so apparently cynical, and I think there was water in my own eyes. He accompanied me to the Victoria, where

we had put up, and I introduced him to my wife, whom he pronounced to be the finest creature he had ever beheld, without even the exception of the Boston belle to whom he had once paid obeisance. I narrated my adventures at full length, as he consented to pass the day with us, and was sincerely thankful to him for the sympathy he showed. For a cool business man, with a slow, methodical, deliberative manner, he was the most feeling man I ever met; and I must say that Americans generally are of this type. When I had concluded, he made me repeat parts over and over again, and at length volunteered to send or himself carry an account of our whereabouts and welfare to the Reis.

He also volunteered to restore the pirogue, minus its crew, to the Nizam, if I chose so to dispose of my now no longer serviceable little bark. To this, fearing for his safety, I at first demurred, but, finding that expostulations were in vain, I at length assented. "I am not afraid," said he, "to meet the Nizam, and feel quite able to run the risk; but," he added, "my good young fellow, you get off to England as fast as you can, and comfort your father's heart. He knows you are not dead, and has gone to interest the Government in your release."

To offer money to this noble-hearted American captain would have been insulting; so a happy thought occurred to me—a tangible way of show-

ing my appreciation of his courage and generosity. Selecting one of the jewels given to me by my father, and which I had been fortunate enough to preserve through all my wanderings, I got my darling wife to press it upon the skipper. "Dear friends," faltered he, "I shall wear this for your sakes, and for the sake of my gallant old friend, whom I may never see again."

So bidding our adieus, I sailed with Mrs. Isabella Wade and our two attendants for old England, in one of the great clipper liners. The *Golden Fleece* was a huge vessel of four thousand tons, and we had a grand cabin; but we both agreed that the little cabin of the pirogue was more pleasant. However, on rounding Cape Horn we admitted that perhaps it was more comfortable in *The Golden Fleece*. Our trip to England was just the same as other trips. My wife improved so greatly in European ways that before we arrived at Southampton one could hardly suppose that she was not European; her skin was so very fair that she would easily be taken for a brunette English girl.

Arrived at length in London, we went to the only hotel I knew, Long's; and, leaving Isabella to her own devices, and our two servants in special charge of the landlady, I set off in quest of our army-agents, who directed me to the Hummums Hotel, Covent Garden. It is a famous place for old Indian officers.

Returning to Long's, I ordered a carriage, and desired Isabella to put on her bonnet, which she had learned to wear with perfect grace. We were soon together in the carriage and rolling off to the Hummums. I sent up to the colonel's rooms to say that a gentleman and lady wished to see Colonel Wade ; and he sent back word that he was unwell, but would be happy to see the persons if they were intimate friends. We went up ; and in another moment I was clasped in the dear old gentleman's arms. My wife had her turn of embraces ; and over the happiness that followed and that has continued to be our lot, I discreetly drop a veil.

THE END.

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